



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>





600071635S

250 . c . 130 .



HOLIDAYS WITH HOBGOBLINS:

AND

TALK OF STRANGE THINGS.

BY

DUDLEY COSTELLO.

"Come on, and do your best
To fright me with your sprites."

Winter's Tale. ACT II. SCENE I.

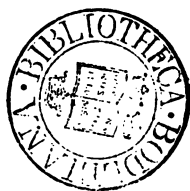
With Illustrations by George Cruikshank.

LONDON:
JOHN CAMDEN HOTTEN, PICCADILLY.

1861.

255 . 2 . 60

LONDON:
SAVILL AND EDWARDS, PRINTERS,
CHANDOS-STREET.



CONTENTS.

| | PAGE |
|--|------|
| SHAVING A GHOST | 1 |
| THE GHOST OF PIT POND | 23 |
| SUPERSTITIONS AND TRADITIONS | 45 |
| MONSTERS | 66 |
| THE WATCHER OF THE DEAD | 91 |
| THE HAUNTED HOUSE NEAR HAMPSTEAD | 112 |
| DRAGONS, GRIFFINS, AND SALAMANDERS | 155 |
| ALCHEMY AND GUNPOWDER | 179 |
| MOTHER SHIPTON | 195 |
| BIRD HISTORY | 223 |
| WITCHCRAFT AND OLD BOGUEY | 245 |
| CRABS | 271 |
| LOBSTERS | 292 |
| THE APPARITION OF MONSIEUR BODRY | 303 |

1

1

1

1

1



Shaving a Ghost.

WITHIN little more than a league from the much-famous Boulogne-sur-Mer there stands

very few of the numerous
out watering-place, which, for
seldom been occupied for
This circumstance has arisen
attractions either of cheap-
but from a particular cause,
is only discovered too late, and
refused to state.

leurval—so it is called—was
hundred years ago, but of the
ly one turret exists, the rest
ively modern date. This turret,
seen from the high road at the extremity of a
long double avenue, gives the place a somewhat
picturesque effect ; but the illusion vanishes when
you come close to the house, which is grave and
formal, and totally destitute of ornament. Con-
structed of stone, with a high slated roof, and all
the windows closed with jalousies of the dull
leaden hue so common in French châteaux,

nothing can well be more uninviting than the aspect of the building.

Yet, if tradition speak truth, there were once very joyous inmates in the Château de Fleurval; and this much is sure that, in the early part of the year 1745, it was thought worthy of being the abode of royalty, the ill-starred Prince, Charles Edward, having been a guest there while waiting on the French coast for the opportunity of setting sail for Scotland.

At that period the château was tenanted by a Jacobite Scottish nobleman, who lived there *en grande tenue*, with a large and multifarious establishment; amongst the members of which were a young Turkish lady, called Madame Esmé, whom the nobleman's brother, a soldier of fortune, had taken prisoner at the siege of Oczakow, in 1737, together with one Ibrahim, her slave, and a one-eyed Calmuck, named Stephan. About the nobleman's person was also a Scottish barber, Davie Kickup by name, who, like his master, came from the shores of Fife. These brief particulars, slight as they are, which live in the recollection of only one man, Pierre Delplanque, the old gardener at Fleurval, whose grandfather held the same post in the time of the Scottish lord, will help us, to a certain extent, to clear away some of the obscurity which always attaches, more or less, to narratives like the present.

As people seldom do anything without a motive, least of all those who are born north of the Tweed, this Scottish nobleman had, no doubt, very good reasons for establishing himself in the Château de Fleurval. In the first place, he had been implicated in the rebellion of 1715, and was obliged to live abroad somewhere; in the next, the locality was near the coast, and intercourse with Scotland frequent; then, the rent of the château was most moderate, the large gardens were very productive, he had plenty of fishing and shooting, and other *droits de seigneur*, the necessities of life in that part of France were uncommonly cheap, and what were necessities to the Scottish nobleman, though luxuries to persons of lower rank—brandy and claret—were in plenty. And, with all that the country afforded, a merry life, it is said, he led of it. No gloomy, desponding banished lord was he, but one who met misfortune with a jovial face, and snapped his fingers at care. The place might be grim and lonely, but what of that? there are grim and lonely places in Scotland, and one of that kind he had left behind. He easily remedied an evil of so little magnitude by never troubling himself about the outside of his house so long as he made it comfortable within; and the loneliness of the situation was nothing to a man who could summon round him at any moment a score of jolly companions—the officers, Irish and Scottish, of the Regiment de

Rooth, which formed part of the Irish brigade then quartered at St. Omer; to say nothing of lively French Marquises, and stray Abbés, who minded little how or where they went astray. Of female society there was not much; yet, now and then, a sort of *grande dames* from Paris, some of those who did not set their faces against the King's new mistress, Madame de Pompadour, would make their appearance at the Château de Fleurval, nothing deterred by the fact that the Scottish nobleman was unmarried, nor scandalized to find that Madame Esmé enjoyed all the authority, though she had no claim to the title of a wife.

In a *ménage* so constituted many events came to pass, or were reported, at which the quiet provincial *noblesse*—who received no invitation to the château—shook their heads; and the *bourgeoisie* of Boulogne—that part, at least, not favoured by the reprobate lord's custom—loudly condemned. But, in the course of time, the remembrance of these things faded away, or was only preserved in the memories of a few of the neighbouring peasants, with whose descendants they became more and more vaguely traditional. Enough, however, was retained of the scenes that were supposed to have occurred at Fleurval, to invest the place with a bad reputation, which clung to it long after the waves of the great Revolution had swept over France, and survived even to a very recent date.

What contributed to keep up the prejudice against the château was the circumstance that the actual proprietor never inhabited it, though he was known to be far from rich, and could certainly have saved money by doing so, instead of getting into debt—which people also knew—in Paris. Not a season went by in Boulogne without the appearance of an advertisement in the *Annotateur*, announcing that the Château de Fleurval was to let. As the price was extremely reasonable, the offer was always eagerly caught at by some new-comer from England who studied economy, or liked the idea of living in a château ; but it so happened that the place was invariably relinquished before the term expired. Sometimes it was a hasty midnight flitting, when, in the hurry of the moment, payment of the rent was forgotten ; but as this is not an uncommon occurrence amongst English residents at Boulogne, no great stress need have been laid upon it ; at others, however, the departure took place with nearly equal precipitation, but unaccompanied by any pecuniary blot. Yet whether the outgoing tenants were victimizers of landlords, or victims to foul smells, whether they fled because they could not pay, or because their health suffered, the same motive for leaving was assigned by the gossips in every case—the Château de Fleurval was declared to be haunted.

This was not publicly said in the market-place

at Boulogne, the loungers in the Rue de l'Ecu did not whisper it to each other, the frequenters of the *établissement* did not make it the subject of their daily conversation; in those places, and with those people, topics were discussed of more immediate interest than the shadowy concerns of another world, or wherefore a dull, ugly house continued on hand. Still, notwithstanding the general indifference, nobody who knew anything of the Château de Fleurval but shrugged their shoulders when they saw the annual advertisement, or smiled significantly when they heard that it was let again.

In the immediate neighbourhood of the château, something more than shrugs and smiles were rife. Folks, there, talked openly enough. Pierre Delplanque, the gardener, was an unimpeachable authority; and he, of an evening, at the village cabaret, when warmed by two or three glasses of "*sacré-chien*," had been heard to say, in very positive language, that he could enlighten the public mind if called upon by the Mayor of Boulogne, his *adjoint*, or other high legal functionary, to do so. Nay, more,—under the same spirituous influence, at a somewhat later hour,—he had let fall darkling words which caused those who listened to prefer society to a solitary walk when they went their homeward way. And thus it got abroad that the reason why no one remained long the tenant of the Château de Fleurval was,

because whoever slept in one particular room was visited in the dead of night by a strange, gaunt bearded figure, arrayed in the costume of a barber, and armed with all the appliances of his calling, who dragged the sleeper from his bed, shaved him on the spot, and concluded the ceremony by bestowing such a pummelling on the shaven one, as always left him insensible on the floor.

Here, most assuredly, if Pierre Delplanque might be depended on, was cause enough to make a night's lodging at the Château de Fleurval uncomfortable, and the only way to circumvent such a ghost as was said to haunt it, would have been to turn the house into a convent, or a boarding-school for young ladies; and yet, I hardly know, even that plan might have failed, for there have been females to whom a razor—but this is an ungallant theme, and I hastily abandon it, preferring the idea that no single lady would ever consent to enter, much less to sleep in a room where a man had once been shaved.

Supernatural agency being almost universally associated with the Terrible, any departure from that high ground suffices for keeping silence on the subject, as nobody likes personally to illustrate the descent from the sublime to the ridiculous. To be scared by a hideous phantom is the legitimate result of a spectral visitation, exciting awe or arousing sympathy; but to be lathered—in more senses than one—by the ghost

of a barber, only exposed the sufferer to unmitigated ridicule. Each Paterfamilias, therefore, who underwent the two-fold process described, acted wisely in keeping his own counsel, and the mystery of the Château de Fleurval was thus increased at every successive withdrawal without a syllable of explanation.

Affairs were in this state at the Château de Fleurval when, in the summer of 1857, a gentleman named MacGranite arrived at Boulogne with a family so large, and an income so narrow, as to make the cheapest place of residence desirable. Mr. MacGranite was a native of Dunfermline; and although, like the rest of its inhabitants, he considered and called that ancient town "the finest place in the warrld"—as, of course, it is—he had quitted it with no more regret than is usually exhibited by his countrymen when they travel south. It was not, however, so much with the design of making a fortune that Mr. MacGranite took the popular direction, as in the hope of retrieving his position, which had suffered from some unlucky speculation; and to obtain time to look about him, and more conveniently arrange with his creditors, he shipped himself, his wife, his nine children, a colly dog, and three Fifeshire lassies on board an Inverkeithing collier, which was bound with her cargo to Boulogne.

Under the circumstances of his arrival—in-

deed, under any circumstances—Mr. MacGranite was not disposed to live at an hotel any longer than he could help, and it was with infinite satisfaction, therefore, that he read the advertisement in the *Annotateur*, which informed the public that the Château de Fleurval was to let. Mr. MacGranite lost no time in calling on the agent, learnt all the particulars which the man of business thought proper to tell him, walked over to Fleurval to see the place, before he signed and sealed, and returned in a state of rapture.

“It will hold us a’,” he said to Mrs. MacGranite, “and so it would if we were twice as many. There’s no great walth o’ furniture, and the floors are brick, upstairs and down, but we’ll do vara weel! And the gaerden, my doo, is as full as it can hold o’ fruits and vegetables of every kind and description; apples and pears, kail and carrots, leeks and potatoes,—oh, there’ll be rare brose for the bairns! I maun ha’e anither crack wi’ the factor tho’, for the gaerdner, a weary auld body, wi’ a nose the colour o’ beet, gave me to understand in his language—which, you know, Mrs. MacGranite, I speak as well as any man in the warrld—that he claimed a proportion: deil ha’e me, but it shall be sma’! When the shatter isn’t let, he gets a’ the produce and sells it here at maerket, and when there’s tenants he only looks for a quarter. He’ll do wi’ less, as sure as my name is Sandy MacGranite.”

This question about the garden stuff was, indeed, the turning point of the negotiation. The agent held out as long as he could for the accustomed perquisite ; but Mr. MacGranite would have belied both his name and nature if he had yielded an inch, and that gentleman's occupation of the Château de Fleurval was the most unprofitable "let" that Pierre Delplanque had ever known.

There was, consequently, no great goodwill between the old gardener and the new-comer ; but Pierre soon saw the kind of person he had to deal with, and thought it prudent to dissemble.

"Wait till he is settled," said Pierre to himself ; "it will be time enough then to disturb him."

So the summer past away, the grapes ripened on the wall, and the MacGranites, great and small, feasted and fed as they had never fed or feasted before, enjoying a perfect horticultural Elysium.

But earthly Elysiums do not endure for ever ; and when autumn began to wane, when the discoloured leaves began to fall, when the days drew in and the evenings grew chill and drear, the young MacGranites ventured less and less out of doors, ceased to play in the larger apartments, clung closer and closer to their nurses as they passed in the twilight from room to room, and huddled more and more together round the large wood fire in the *salon* where they chiefly lived. This change in their habits was not caused by the

ordinary apprehensions of children, but by the fear of something that had been imparted. The time had arrived for Pierre Delplanque to sow the seeds of that discomfort which he had kept in reserve for the winter season, and by degrees he opened his budget.

There had so long been a succession of English families at the Château de Fleurval, that the old gardener, who was a fixture there, had managed to pick up a good deal of the language he so constantly heard, and was able to speak it intelligibly. He did not, accordingly, neglect his acquirement, but whenever he had an opportunity, which was often enough, would talk with the servants, and tell them strange stories of the place, till at length he succeeded in fairly convincing them that the house was haunted. It may readily be believed that those who heard these stories did not keep them to themselves : secret-keeping is not the habit of their class. The children learnt them in whispers, and the whispers spread till they reached the ears of Mr. and Mrs. MacGranite, strong-minded persons both, but not altogether inaccessible to superstition. They, of course, discouraged all such "idle clavers ;" but say what they pleased, they could not prevent an uncomfortable feeling, a sense of something "uncanny," from prevailing, of which they had their share. Nothing, however, in the shape of personal experience had chanced, to confirm the rumoured ghostly visita-

tions, and Mr. MacGranite had far too much worldly wisdom to think, like his predecessors, of shifting his ground before he was actually invaded.

"Let's ha'e nae mair o' this nonsense," he said, somewhat angrily, when the subject was broached by the fireside, one dark October evening, by Sandy, the eldest of the red-haired tribe; "let's ha'e nae mair of this daft nonsense about langbearded sparrits, and Turks, and Calmucks, and Scotch barbers, and the Lord knows what! Gang till yer beds every one o' ye,—and mind that I dunna come round wi' a birch twig to fright ye in good earnest!"

Let no one say that thrift was at the bottom of this abrupt dismissal, though Mr. MacGranite fully appreciated the advantage of not wasting fire and candle; let us rather set it to the right account,—a laudable desire to keep up the courage of his family, by throwing contempt upon all supernatural manifestations.

Domestic affairs, into which it is not necessary to enter, had so arranged the internal economy of the Château de Fleurval, that Mr. MacGranite slept alone, aloof from the partner of his bosom. His bedchamber, a large oblong room, was situated on the first floor, at the foot of the turret that flanked the western extremity of the building, mention of which has already been made. There was a door of communication between this

room and the turret, but it had not been opened since the MacGranites came to the château, and was generally supposed to be barred outside, as well as bolted and locked within. Mr. MacGranite, therefore, always went to roost as calmly as the old white owl—Hulot, he was called—that occupied the dilapidated tenement overhead.

Mr. MacGranite's bedchamber, though large and lofty, was not a cheerful-looking place. The windows, of which there were two at each end, were curtainless and bare; the *poêle* of blue china, with its long tubular chimney that ran up to the ceiling and disappeared through the wall, was suggestive of cold rather than heat, for it never held a fire. The *parquet* consisted, not of polished wood, but of dull red tiles; and not an inch of carpet kept the feet from their chilly contact; as to the bed, it was high and broad, and naked of aspect, hangings having been thought a superfluity. The furniture of the room corresponded with the rest of the apartment—an old *fauteuil* of faded yellow velvet, and three or four chairs to match, being all it contained. I forget; there was also by the bed-head a small *table de nuit*, on which Mr. MacGranite set his candle while he prepared for his couch.

On the night that witnessed the stern ejection of his offspring from the *salon*, but three or four hours later, Mr. MacGranite withdrew to rest as usual. He had previously occupied himself with

a book, selecting one from his scanty library that treated of the topography and antiquities of his own part of Scotland, partly for the entertainment he always found in it—often as he had read it through—and partly to distract his thoughts from local objects. The book was in his hand even after he went to bed, but he did not read long; the cold made him shiver. He put out the light, buried his head beneath the clothes, and very soon was fast asleep, making quite as much noise as old Hulot, but in a different key.

It is all very well to pull the bedclothes over your head, but the thing is to keep them there. This, apparently, Mr. MacGranite was not able to do; for, cold as he was when he lay down, he woke up absolutely starved, with not a particle of covering over him save the garment he slept in. It was no accidental displacement; the counterpane, blanket, and sheet had been literally stripped off, and were tossed in a heap over the foot of the bed. To his astonishment, the light, which he had put out, was burning; and, to his greater astonishment, there stood at his bedside a figure at least six feet high, with small blue eyes, that glared like those of a hyena, and a long white beard that reached to its middle. The costume of the figure was also remarkable. On its head it wore a flat velvet cap of some dark colour, a loose white linen jacket attired its upper half, black calimanco breeches and grey stockings

arrayed its nether extremities; its feet were thrust into heelless slippers; and at its waist dangled a long white apron, with an enormous pocket in front, from which projected the handles of various instruments. In its large bony hands it held—in the left a soap-dish, in the right a shaving-brush.

Mr. MacGranite took in all these objects at a glance; indeed, he had not time for more, as the moment he opened his eyes the figure addressed him in words which, though smacking of his native tongue, had in them something of a foreign accent.

“Ye’ll be wantin’ a shave the morn,” said the Figure, with a flourish of the brush towards him. “Get up, mon, and set yersel doon in yon chair. I’s e handle ye!”

Mr. MacGranite was, for a few seconds, utterly bewildered. Was the legend true, then, which Sandy had poured into his brothers’ and sisters’ ears, about the Scotch barber’s ghost, and all the rest of it? Was *he* to be the phantom’s victim, to be shaved against his will, and beaten afterwards? The figure seemed capable of exercising both functions. He looked a master of his craft, and his stature and length of limb were formidable. Was what he saw a reality, or only a disagreeable dream?

Further conjecture was not permitted him, for the Figure, in a voice of thunder, and in Lowland

Scotch of the broadest and most profane, bade him "hunker doon" in the arm-chair, and tuck the napkin about him, which he drew from his capacious pocket and flung in Mr. MacGranite's face.

"Het water's scarce in these parts," said the Figure, lathering Mr. MacGranite's countenance with fearful velocity. "It's aye hetter whar I cam frae—mair's the petty!"

The application seemed, in fact, as cold as ice, and Mr. MacGranite's jaws rattled like a pair of nut-crackers.

"Bide still," said the Figure; "I'll gar ye greet before a's dune!"

Out came the glittering steel; hastily it was stropped on one horny hand; the next moment Mr. MacGranite's nose was wrung with a vigorous tweak, and then, with lightning flashes, the razor skimmed his cheeks—up-strokes, down-strokes, side-strokes, back-strokes, all were executed with a dexterity that Mr. MacGranite might have dwelt upon as marvellous, if the whole affair had not been the most marvellous thing that had ever befallen him. It seemed less like the ordinary process of shaving than an effect of electricity, done, as it were, in the twinkling of an eye.

Mr. MacGranite, it must be owned, would gladly have prolonged this part of the transaction, for he gave a shrewd guess at what was to follow.

He trembled in every limb, and when the Figure told him to stand up, he could hardly keep his legs.

But instead of committing the fell assault he dreaded, the Figure glided into the chair which he had just quitted, and diving again into the large pocket, drew forth an enormous pair of scissors, which he held out towards Mr. MacGranite.

“Can ye shave a body?” demanded the Figure.

Luckily Mr. MacGranite was a Scotchman, and interpreted the vernacular correctly.

“The muckle Deil himsel could na do it better,” he replied.

“My certie,” said the Figure, “but ye’re a bauld ane! Clip away, and sparr not;” and, with a nod of its head, the Figure jerked its beard into Mr. MacGranite’s hand.

He set to in good earnest. Fast as snow-flakes fell the long, white, waving hairs, till nothing but a close-set stubble was left. Then he ground in the soap like a housemaid scouring a door-step; deep amidst the furrows ploughed the shaving-brush, and with all the muscular action he could command, sawed away amongst the bristles as if he were a back-woodsman making a clearing.

“Deil hae me!” said the Figure—“but that’s past prayin’ for—ye’re a canny chield. Ye handle a razor maist as well as I do mysel. You’ll no belang to the profession?”

Mr. MacGranite replied in the negative.

"It's an ancient and an honourable one," said the Figure, thoughtfully. "We were aye callit barber-surgeons in my time—not shavers! What *are ye, mon?*"

"A Scotsman," returned Mr. MacGranite.

"I kent that by your tongue," said the Figure. "From what part of Scotland?"

"My native place is Dunfermline," said Mr. MacGranite.

"And mine," said the Figure, "is Kircoddy! Deil's in me, but we're neebors! Are any o' the family o' Kickup still livin'?"

"My wife, Janet Kickup, is the last of her race."

"Ye dinna say sae! Gie's your hand, mon. Blude's thicker than water; you'll be no the waur for this, I'm thinkin'."

The Figure seized Mr. MacGranite's hand, and squeezed it till the bones cracked again. When it was at length released, the Figure stroked its own chin, apparently with great satisfaction.

"I niver thocht," it said, "that the day wad come when I should be free o' my beardie! Lang, lang, hae I watched and waited: mony's the carl I hae shaved mysel, but deil a one till noo has had the courage to tackle wi' me. A wheen daft bodies, starin' and gugglin' when I spak to them, as if they could na understand! But I raddled their bones for 'em! Ech, sirs, but I keckt ye

about like foot-ba's ; ye canna sae ye did na get your fairin'!"

The Figure laughed loudly, as it recalled the punishment inflicted on the previous occupants of the chamber, and Mr. MacGranite began to quake again.

"There's nae need for ye to shiver, mon ! Ye've broken the spell. I'm clean shaved, recht through wi't ; and now I'll gang back to my grave, and sleep in peace ! But I've aye a story to tell, so set yersel doon and listen."

Mr. MacGranite did as he was commanded, and the Figure proceeded—

"My name, when I lived i' the flesh, was Davie Kickup. I was first valet and barber to the Yarl o' Tommietool. We were out in the Fefteen, and suld hae been in the Forty-five, but my lord he behoved to hae a bad fit o' the gout the day the Chevalier left for Scotland, and he could na follow him. The Forty-five's an auld tale noo, and ye'll, may be, hae heard aneuch o't ; moreover, it has naethin' to do wi huz. Wull, my Lord Tommietool he lived in great state here in this Château de Fleurval. Ech, sirs, but there were rare doings in those days ! The runlets o' Bordeaux and Nantz we emptied might hae floated the English navy. And the womankind, and the dancin', and the feastin' and pleasurin',—but as John Knox, the worthy man, used to say of a' sic like vanities, it could na last. Whiles it did, tho', we'd a gay

time o't, and Madame Esmé,—she was a Turkish lady, sib wi' my lord, ye ken,—she aye queened it away like Madame Pompeydoor hersel. The precious stanes that glittered on Madame Esmé's dress were worth a king's ransom, but their glitter was just darkness to the licht that shone in her ee. But my lord's gaen, and she's gaen, and a' the abbés, and markisses, and officers, and fine ladies, they're a' gaen,—and whar they're gaen to I needn't to say! Madame Esmé, she died of a fever, and the Yarl o' Tommietool, he died of drink, grievin' for her loss. The nicht my lord went, I sot by his bedside, and received his latest breath. But a little before the last gasp,—he'd been silent for some time,—he raised himself up, and said :

“ ‘Davie, my man,’—he aye call'd me Davie,—‘ye've shavit me hunderds o' times!’

“ ‘Yes, my lord,’ says I, ‘and I hope to shave ye hunderds mair!’

“ ‘Ye'll not do that, Davie,’ says he ; ‘ye'll never shave me but once, and that will be when I'm cauld and dead.’

“ ‘Ye maunna speak o' dyin', my lord,’ says I.

“ ‘Ay, Davie, but I maun,’ says he.

“ And then my lord gave a deep groan. Presently he spoke again —

“ ‘Davie,’ says my lord, ‘you and I hae been great sinners. I'm thinkin' we'll burn for't.’

“ ‘Speak for yersel, my lord,’ says I ; ‘I've nae great fancy for burnin'!’

“ ‘Then ye’ll freeze,’ says he.

“ ‘May be not that neither, my lord,’ says I, rather nettled to think that a dyin’ man, as he was, should dispose of my saul as if it had been his ain.

“ ‘Then, I’ll tell ye what, Davie,’ cries he, in a passion, ‘if it’s the last word I hae to say, ye’s hear it ; if ye winna burn nor freeze, ye shall stay here, barber as ye are, shavin’ folks to all eternity, till your beard’s as lang as my arm, and never a quiet nicht shall ye hae in your grave till ye meet wi’ somebody bauld aneuch to tak ye by the snout and mak ye look like a Christian, Davie!’

“ And wi’ this, in a huff, my lord turned his face to the wa’, and never turned it bock again. It was a sair thing, that the words of a man who had led sic a life as the Yarl o’ Tommietool should come true, but so it was ; and here, for a good hundred years and mair, have I been shavin’, shavin’, shavin’, and if it had na been for you, Mr. MacGranite,—I ken your name brawly,—here I should have stayed, as my lord said, to all eternity. But I’ve a grateful mind, Mr. MacGranite, and I hae the means of recompensing your kindness. I made a pretty penny in the service o’ the Yarl o’ Tommietool. I was a savin’ body, and put by the maist o’t. Draw nigh, Mr. MacGranite, till I whisper in your lug.”

What the Figure said to Mr. MacGranite, nobody ever knew, save him to whom it was told ; but in moments of conviviality, when the whisky

toddy had gone its rounds—after his return to Dunfermline, with all his affairs happily settled—Mr. MacGranite has often told the story of how he once shaved a ghost, though nobody could ever make out whether he was in jest or earnest.

The Ghost of Pit Pond.

IN the days when stage-coaches flourished, there was no better house on the Bath road for the traveller to stop at than "The Castle" at Marlborough. No disparagement to Mr. Botham's celebrated inn at Salt Hill, but that was "a place for lovers, and lovers only;" you might breakfast there, it is true, but if you were not newly married, it was scarcely advisable to trespass longer than the promised twenty minutes—practically ten—which the coachman allowed for the consumption of that meal. A single man sojourning at Salt Hill, was a fish completely out of water; he excited no curiosity on the part of the chambermaids; the waiters were inattentive and careless, for what was a bachelor's gratuity compared with a bridegroom's; he gave the young lady at the bar no opportunity for displaying the fluttering sympathy which a bridal party always awakens; and to the landlord he was objectionable, because he occupied space that might be more profitably filled, and besides, when his little bill was sent in, the bachelor looked at the items before paying it, a

proceeding which no true Benedick ever dreamt of. You see, therefore, that the only course for the solitary traveller was to resume his seat on the box, and push on. There was nothing to delay him at Reading, but when he had traversed Marlborough forest, and pulled up at "The Castle," where dinner was always ready, to stay there for the night, if he were not pressed for time, was as sensible a thing as he could possibly do. Several motives might induce him: First—if he were imaginative—the immense size of the building, with its multitudinous rooms and long galleries, extending from wing to wing, suggested or recalled all kinds of inn-adventures: it was impossible that such a house of entertainment could stand there without furnishing forth some record of the events of the road—the run-away match, the broken-down post-chaise, the stoppage by highwaymen, the mail-coach passengers dug out of the snow, or the duel across the supper-table. Next—if he were only matter of fact—the pleasant aspect of the jovial host and bustling attendants, the glimpse of the larder, and the more transitory visions of pretty faces in caps and ribbons, testified to creature comforts in the most unmistakeable manner. He might be bored by his stage-coach companions, or fatigued by the journey, or desirous of a new sensation, or eager for that warmest welcome which Shenstone has told us, with a sigh, is only to be found at an inn. At all events, there being no

particular reason to the contrary, he could not be very far wrong if he had his portmanteau taken out of the boot of the coach, and ordered a bed at "The Castle." I did so, under one or other of the circumstances alluded to, some twenty years ago—before the inn was converted into a college—and had no cause to repent the act.

On all the great high roads of England, there is some house that once was famous for something. At Hartley Row, it used to be stewed carp; at Godalming, a spatch-cock; at Sittingbourne, veal cutlets; trout at St. Albans; the sauce to eat it with—good, also, for rumpsteaks—at Bedfont; mutton and chickens—marred, however, by too much matrimony—at Burford Bridge; eels at Watford; spiced beef at Grantham; and so on of the rest. "The Castle," at Marlborough, was celebrated. I soon found, for what you seldom get in perfection anywhere out of Normandy: a roast capon. The rearing of capons appears to have been practised time out of mind, at Marlborough, for Camden tells us that every freeman on his admission to the guild was bound to present the Mayor with "a couple of greyhounds, two white capons, and a white bull."

I found my quarters extremely comfortable, and decided upon remaining till I got tired of them. My visit to the country had chiefly been for change of scene and relaxation from work, and I was as well off on the Wiltshire downs as anywhere

else. No better exercise could be had than these steep hills afforded, and the Roman encampments scattered over them supplied numerous objects of interest. How delicious the feeling was, I can well remember, with which, after climbing the lofty ridge that runs parallel with the high road, I threw myself down on the short thymy grass and bared my breast to the soft western breeze, drinking in the air that seemed to give me new life! What a glorious view was spread before me! I knew nothing of the locality, but a shepherd, whom I questioned as he passed, told me that a certain gray line which cut the horizon to the south was the spire of Salisbury cathedral, distant, as he said, "ever so fur,"—a definition which, to his thinking, conveyed an idea of infinite space, and was, probably, as the crow flies, about five-and-twenty miles.

"But," continued my informant, "they do say them that's out at sea, mariners and such like, can see the very place we're standin' on; least-ways, the white house yon, top of Martin's Hill, where the soldiers' graves are."

"What soldiers?" I asked.

He couldn't tell. "Some that were buried ever so long ago; there must have been a hundred or more, the bones were so plenty, besides bricks and queer things that he didn't know the names of. Gentlefolks often come into these parts to dig 'em up. Some said there was treasures

to be found, and his father had told him how people that he knew had dug down on Wick Farm for a gold table. They wasn't to speak till they'd got it up, but as soon as they saw it they cried out, 'Here it is!' and it sunk out of sight, and they never could get a look at it again! No," he added, with an air of complete conviction, "'twont be seen for another hundred years!"

I observed that I saw signs of encampments in various directions; had they all been explored?

"Mostly," he thought; "he had been at the opening of several, but didn't fancy any good ever come of it; indeed, 'twarn't likely, if, as folks said, the devil had any hand in making 'em."

I inquired how that personage came to be associated with these antiquities?

"Well, it was what people believed down in those parts. There's Wansditch," he added, pointing to an embankment that ran along the crest of the hill; "the devil built that on a Wensday—that's why they give it that name."

My pastoral friend proving communicative, I encouraged the traditional vein in which he seemed willing to indulge, and learnt from him many particulars chiefly turning upon subjects of popular belief. Not, as may be supposed, all at once, but at intervals, when I became better known on the hill-side. A shepherd has many idle moments, and it was a novelty for him to meet with some one to talk to while his flock

were quietly browsing. From St. Martin's Hill, the locality which he principally affected, all the places were visible which in his eyes had any interest. There was Pewsey Hill, about five miles off, "where the cat ate the bacon," a legend he was unable to explain further than "it was what folks said about it." There was Draycot Farm, below Hewish, "where old Harry Pike used to live—him as strangled himself in his garters; they buried him down there where you see that round-topped bush, just at the cross-roads; his coffin was nothing but a few boards with no top to it; they drove a blackthorn stake through his body—that's the very bush you're looking at—it's grow'd to almost a tree, and bears hedge-speakes (sloes) now, but few people eat 'em except boys that don't know the story—not but what boys will eat anything—I used to, myself, when I was one. They tell a queer story about old Harry Pike. You see, the reason why he killed himself was, they say, because he had wronged his brother's widow out of a lot of money. Poor Tom Pike was in the waggon line between Melksham and Frome, and down away there by Wells, and he and Harry was partners. She got a lawyer from Bath—I forget his name—and he took it into court, but they never could prove nothing agin old Harry, whatever they thought; and after the trial, one Sunday afternoon, as he was a-drinking at the White Horse—that's the public-house at Wotton

Rivers, the village down there by the church—a man as I know, one Jem Taylor, put it to old Harry about his brother's widow; and he and some more went on ever so long, and at last old Harry he fell on his knees, right in the middle of the parlour, down on the sandy floor, and prayed that his soul might never quit his body if he'd ever taken a shilling of his brother's money, alive or dead; and he looked so white and awful when he got up agin that Jem Taylor, nor none of 'em, didn't like to say no more to him. Well, after that, he seemed to be a miserable man; nothing didn't go right with him, and he got worse and worse; and one day—that was on a Sunday afternoon, too—just three year afterward, he was found strangled in the back kitchen of his house, sitten in a cheer, with one of his own garters twisted tight round his neck, and his face as black as one of them yoes. Nobody had done it but hisself, for the door was locked inside, and nothing was touched. Well, they buried him, as I told you, but it wasn't much use buryin' *him* after the false oath he had took, for then the truth come out. You perhaps will hardly believe it, sir, but though the stake was driv right through his body, they couldn't keep him down in his grave, he was always a turnin' and heavin'; and every day for weeks and weeks the mould was turned up as fresh as if you'd done it with a spade. Harry Pike's soul hadn't quitted his body!

When the blackthorn came to grow, then the ground lay still, but whether that tree will ever die or not nobody knows ; if it does, it must die of itself, for folks hereabouts always calls it Harry Pike's tree, and never goes no nigher to it than they can help.

“ Ah ! many queer things has happened in that valley, even in my time, let alone afore then. You've heard tell of Jack-o'-lantern, perhaps ? Well, he's been scores of times in the mash there, this side of the Kennet and Avon canal. I once saw him myself about a mile off ; he'd a lantern in his hand as plain to be seen as your face or mine. No ! I couldn't make *him* out exactly, and whether he's like a man or no, I wont venture to say ; but when once you get 'tangled with Jack, there's no gettin rid of him till daylight, unless you lay yourself flat down on your face. There was William Bullock—he's dead now—but, when he was young, he went one night to court his sweetheart, Mary Moore, at Wotton Rivers ; she's living, and tells the story, so we know it to be true. Well, this young man, after parting with Mary Moore, 'twixt nine and ten at night—our country folks always goes to bed about that time—he took his way home agin ; it was in June, one of them hot foggy evenings we have hereabouts, and just as he was coming nigh the Goblin's Hole—that's where the bank moulders away both sides of the road, in the hollow—there

Jack 'tangled him. He hadn't the sense to lay down, and first Jack dragged him through the brith-hedge (quickset) by the toll-path, then he got him into the canal, after that into the long copse, then over the canal again, into the mash, and so up by the woods, right under Martin's Hill, what we're on now ; and when he got home in the morning his face and hands was scratched all over ; if he'd been fighting all night with cats, they couldn't have marked him worse ; his clothes was pretty nigh torn off his back, and he was so bad altogether he kept his bed for a week. He always said 'twas Jack done it, and so Mary Moore says to this day."

But dismal tales were more the staple commodity of the narrator than light or ludicrous incidents ; and one of that description—in all probability, it was his *cheval de bataille*—he gave, as nearly as I can recollect, in the following words :—

"If you look away to the right, from where you're sitten, keeping your eye along the road, till you come to the end of the plantation—the Fiddle Plantation we calls it, because it's shaped like one—you'll see the chimbleys and part of the gable-end of a farmhouse, built of dark red brick. It's a low-built house, with wings to it that juts out in front, but the trees hides 'em from here. That's called Hewish Farm. It stands by itself like, though there's only two

meadows betwixt it and Hewish. Hewish was a large town once, but it's only a poor village now; you may count the houses, there aint above twenty, and not a public-house among 'em, so that the farm is a lonely kind of place, after all; perhaps if the house was smaller, it wouldn't seem so. About fifty years ago, when I was quite a boy, one Mr. Reeve used to live at Hewish Farm. He was a sort of gentleman-farmer; that's to say, his relations wasn't poor people, and he'd no call to look after the farm himself, if he hadn't been minded to. But he took a liking to it as soon as he was his own master; and so he went on, till he got to be thirty year old, never thinking of nothing but sowing the land, and getting the crops, and breeding sheep, and such like. He was a well-looking man, and people thought it a pity he didn't get a wife, and make himself a comfortable home; not but what Hewish was comfortable enough, only he was alone in it. There was plenty of young women in Marlbro', respectable tradesmen's daughters, and what not, would only have been glad enough to have him if he'd asked 'em. But that wasn't to be.

“One summer's evening—I've heard my father tell the story so often it seems now as if I'd been there myself—one summer's evening Mr. Reeve had been round the farm, and was going home to his supper, when he saw my father—he worked there—just finishing something he had in hand,

seeing turnips I think it was ; and so he stopped to speak to him. While they was talking, mostly about the weather and harvest prospects, he hears a sharp, rattling noise, like a horse's hoofs galloping very hard. The field they stood on was close to the road, and both of 'em runs to the hedge to see what was coming. Sure enough it was a horse, and a lady upon it, galloping down Jewish Hill as if she was riding a race. How the horse kept his legs down the steep pitch was a wonder, but how the lady kept her seat was a greater ; she seemed, my father said, to have been born in a saddle, and perhaps he warn't far wrong. But 'twasn't for pleasure she rode down Jewish Hill at that rate, good rider as she was. Her horse had runned away with her, and so she come, whether she would or no. It was bad enough for the hill to be so steep, but there was something worse than that—a chalk-pit that stood at the turn of the road, about half-way down. 'If that creetur,' says my father, 'don't catch sight of the pit, it's all up.' On they come, howsever, straight on end ; there warn't no time for the horse to turn if he'd been ever so minded to, the combe you see being so steep, and he with so much way on him. But if the horse didn't see the pit, the lady did. And what do you think she does ? Instead of throwing of herself off, or screaming, or pulling at the rein, she gives her horse's head a lift, lays into him with her whip as hard as

she can cut, and away they flies right into the middle of the air. Dashed to pieces among the flints at the bottom of the pit was all my father and Mr. Reeve ever looked for; but there must have been a good spring in that horse—a bright bay he was, my father said—for he landed clear on the lower side of the pit, right away among some peggall bushes (whitethorn) that grow'd at the edge: it was full five-and-twenty foot that jump, if it was an inch—to say nothing of the drop. But that warn't all: there the lady set; if she'd been a stattoo cut out of stone along with the horse, she couldn't have set steadier. 'A good leap that!' was all she said; and then she made a queer kind of laugh, and stared round, and her hands begun to tremble. But her courage come back agin when the bay horse begun to struggle to get out of the bushes, though by that time my father and Mr. Reeve was over the hedge and close alongside her, and Mr. Reeve he caught hold of the bridle to keep the horse from backing into the pit, as he might have done; and so amongst them the lady got safe out. The first thing as Mr. Reeve asked her was, how she felt herself? Thirsty, she said she was, and wanted a glass of water. Well, there warn't no water to be had no nigher than Mr. Reeve's pond—Pit Pond we calls it—just below his house, so the least he could do was to ask the lady to step into the farm, and take some refreshment there. She

didn't make no difficulty, being so dry ; but though he offered her ale and cider, and even wine, nothing but water would she touch ; and my father he run out with a jug and filled it out of Pit Pond—a clear, bright pool it was then, like a fountain, you could count every flint that lay at the bottom—and just as he was bringing of it in he saw somebody else come riding down Hewish Hill, shouting with all his might. So when he'd set the jug down he run out into the road and met a gentleman on horseback, looking very wild and fiery, who asked him in a thick sort of voice if he'd seen a lady ride by. My father then told him what had happened, and how the lady was inside of Mr. Reeve's house at that moment ; on which the gentleman jumps off his horse, and, without so much as telling my father to hold him, rushes in too, calling out 'Em'ly ! Em'ly !' 'My dear John !' she cries, as soon as she sees him, and she falls into his arms all but fainting.

“When she'd recovered herself a bit, the gentleman began to thank Mr. Reeve for his hospitality to his sister ;—he, Mr. Reeve, said afterwards to my father, it made his heart jump like to hear the lady was only his sister ; he'd never felt anything of the sort before, and couldn't keep his eyes off her, and a beautiful creature she was, not more than nineteen years old, with such lovely eyes, and the sweetest voice that ever was heard,”

To abridge the shepherd's story, which lasted a live-long hour, it appeared that the gentleman and lady had only just arrived in that part of the country, and were staying at the Castle Inn at Marlborough. They had brought their horses with them, and being out for an evening ride, the lady's horse had run away and taken the road to Hewish. Having witnessed what had happened, and being so near, Mr. Reeve rode over the next morning to Marlborough to pay his respects and ask after the lady. He found her quite well, but alone, her brother having been obliged to go to London on some pressing business. Mr. Reeve's heart had not leapt in his bosom without cause; he was already deeply in love, and his passion grew with every hour. Nor did it seem to him that his case was hopeless; for, during the absence of the lady's brother, he was admitted whenever he called, and allowed to join Miss Emily—she was known by no other name—in the exercise of which she was fond, and knowing the country for miles round, he proved an excellent guide. He used generally to manage to bring her home by Hewish; and the last day on which they rode out together, she dismounted to see his garden and homestead, and all the plenishing of the farm, and while they walked by the brink of Pit Pond he made her an offer of marriage. It was never known exactly in what way the offer was received. Some said it was at once rejected in an angry

manner ; others that Miss Emily cried a great deal, and said it was impossible ; but Mrs. Barlow, who lived at Hewish Farm as Mr. Reeve's house-keeper, and is reported to have seen something of what took place, always declared that whatever Miss Emily might have replied, she was sure Mr. Reeve kissed her more than once and called her his own ; after which, without coming into the house again, they mounted their horses and rode away. Whether this were true or not, at all events Mr. Reeve did not accompany her into Marlborough, but must have taken leave of her somewhere on the road, for she was alone when she got down at the door of the Castle Inn. What became of him afterwards for several hours is a mystery, since he did not return till past midnight, long after Mrs. Barlow had gone to bed, but she heard him stable his horse, and afterwards go up to his own room, where he walked to and fro, she said, till sunrise. All that day, and the next, and the next after that, and so on for several more, he looked very pale and ill, and didn't ride out or go over the farm, but sat near the window, making as if he was reading, though, as Mrs. Barlow added, "his eye was on the road all the time, and every five minutes he went to the gate to see if the postman was in sight," for it seemed he expected a letter. He got one at last, but matters were not at all mended by it : on the contrary, he got paler and thinner, and used to

.

shut himself up in his room, and write by the hour together. Whom he wrote to nobody knew; for he never entrusted his letters to any one, but rode off with them himself, without leaving word where he was gone to or when he should be back.

After about two months had gone by in this manner, another letter came for him. It was charged with a heavy postage, and Jacob Stride, the postman, said it came from abroad. The next day Mr. Reeve told his housekeeper he was going away for some time: he left money with her to pay all necessary expenses from that time till Christmas, and then set out. He took the coach to London, but where he went afterwards nobody at Hewish ever heard.

It was not till New Year's-eve that he returned, and when he did so, those who knew him best could scarcely have sworn that he was the same person who, six months before, had been such a quiet, contented, happy-looking young man. Deep lines were in his face now, his hair had grown grey, his frame was meagre; there was restlessness in his eye, and impatience on his lips, as if he struggled with mental more than with bodily pain. His manner, too, was as much altered as his person: formerly he had a kind word for every one—now, he spoke seldom, and always harshly. He seemed to take no pleasure in anything, unless it were to stand for hours at a time

on the brink of Pit Pond, looking down into the water.

Let me give the rest of this tale as the shepherd told it—

“ After not seeming to care much what had become of the farm while he was away, or to take any pride in it when he got back, one morning in February—it was Candlemas-day—Mr. Reeve got up early, just as he used to do aforetime, and went round to my father and said, as it was lambing time, and the snow was on the ground, he’d like him to look well after the young lambs as soon as they was dropped, and keep ’em nice and warm ; and my father said he’d be sure to, for he was glad to see his master take an interest in the poor dumb things ; he fancied it a good sign. He little thought what was going to happen. Breakfast time come, but Mr. Reeve was wanting, and Mrs. Barlow she waited an hour or more, wondering where he was. At last she sent out to look for him, and the first person the girl met was the cowboy, who told her he’d seen his master, an hour before, walking round and round Pit Pond, but stopping every now and then, and saying something to himself. What it was, the boy was too far off to hear, but he thought he heard the name of ‘ Em’ly ’ twice repeated, and then Mr. Reeve looked up, and seeming to think the boy was watching of him, sent him with a message to a place a mile off ; and the boy said he

should never forget his master's look when he spoke to him, it was so cold-like and ghastly. They begun now to suspect that something had gone wrong with Mr. Reeve, and away they all hurries down to Pit Pond, and there, sure enough, they sees Mr. Reeve's hat floating atop of the water. They got rakes, and they got hooks, and poles, and ropes, and everything they could think of, and dragged the pond right through and through, but they could find nothing: whatever he'd done with himself, he warn't drowned. So they sets about to look somewhere else, and my father, who'd joined the rest, he spied footmarks in the snow that looked like Mr. Reeve's, for they was littler than the farm servants'; and they led to a barn where there hadn't been no threshing done yet, but the oats and barley was still mowed up, just as it first stood. The door of this barn was ever so little ajar, as if it had been pulled-to from the inside, but hadn't come quite home. My father and another goes inside the barn, the rest was too scared to follow, and they soon sees that somebody had been there, for ever so many sheaves were scattered about on the threshing-floor. Up they climbs amongst the oats, and as my father was groping about in the dark, he strikes his face agin something; he puts out his hand, and feels a pair of legs hanging down. He remembered then, all in a moment, that there was a beam above that could be reached from the top

of the stack, afore the sheaves was thrown down, and he cried out to his partner to set the barn doors wide open, and then there come in a stream of light, and poor Mr. Reeve was seen hanging from the beam, with a rope round his neck. They cut him down directly, but it was of no use ; he was quite dead.

“ Mr. Reeve, as I told you before, sir, had relations as was well-to-do ; and though there couldn’t be no doubt that he died by his own hand, he was buried like a Christian, not like old Harry Pike ; but then *he* was hated, and everybody liked poor Mr. Reeve, and pitied his case. What he did it for seemed pretty certain—love for Miss Em’ly. Letters was found as told all that story. It came out, from one thing and another, that she warn’t the gentleman’s sister after all. Nayther was she his wife. He was a young gentleman of high family, married to some one else afore he seed her, which was at a circus in Bath, where she rode the flying horse in the ring. There was a bill of the performance found in Mr. Reeve’s desk, with her name in it. ‘ Miss Em’ly Featherweight ’ (that couldn’t have been her real name), ‘ the ee-questrian wonder,’ with a picter of her in a hat and feathers, leaping her horse through a circle of fire ; but my father said it warn’t nigh handsome enough, for the bright eyes warn’t there, and you couldn’t hear the sweet voice as was hers. Where Mr. Reeve got

this bill nobody could tell ; most likely 'twas when he went away, for then he learnt all he knew, just as he wrote it down : how he followed her abroad, how he found out that the gentleman ill-used and left her, and how she died at a place called Brussels, in a sort of prison-hospital, wasted to a skeleton and broken-hearted ; she that only six months before was so beautiful and happy.

“ It was a cousin of Mr. Reeve’s that come to him at Hewish Farm after he was dead and gone. Gone, I oughtn’t to say—for it was long before he went ; and up to this day there’s some of the old people as will have it he’s to be seen still. The first notion there was about his walking come from one of the women-servants, who met him close to Pit Pond one evening at dusk, where he was looking into the water, after his custom when he was alive. Then one of the ploughmen saw him more than once, coming down one of the furrows, as he went up another ; but he always vanished when he got within about a team’s length. Others saw him nigh the barn where he hung himself ; and at last it got so bad, that none of the people liked to stir out alone, or for that matter, stay on the farm. The place got a bad name, and it behoved Mr. Martin, him as succeeded to the property, to get rid of it, if he did not want everything to go to rack and ruin.

“ After a good deal of talking amongst the folks at Hewish, the upshot was to speak to the clergy-

man of the parish, and ask him if he couldn't do something to lay the sperrit. He wouldn't have nothing to do with it at first; but in the end he consented, and then, the thing having got wind, five or six more clergymen in the parish round about said they'd join, and so they did. I can't tell how many people was assembled in the biggest room in the farmhouse, but there was the clergymen with their prayer-books and gowns, and there was Mr. and Mrs. Martin, and the parish clerk of Hewish, and my father was there, and a many more besides. The first thing the clergymen done was to exercise the sperrit—read him up, that is; and it's as true as you're setten' there, Mr. Reeve, he come into the room, nobody couldn't see how or by what entrance.

“He warn't a bit white, like a ghost, as most of 'em expected, but was dressed just the way he used to walk about the farm, only his head was more on one side, bent down like on his breast, and he guggled in his talk when he spoke. The clergyman of Hewish, he asked the sperrit why he hunted about, and what he wanted; and the sperrit said it was on account of the trouble his soul had come to for having hung hisself, and he cleaved to be laid in the Red Sea, to keep him cool, he was so hot, he said. Then the clergyman asked him if Pit Pond wouldn't do; that was always cool, being in a shady place; and the sperrit, my father said, made a kind of shudder

that went right through them all; and then he told the clergyman Pit Pond would do, if so be he was laid there for a hundred years. So, upon that, all the clergymen took up their books to pray him away, and the first words did it; for, no sooner had they said, 'In the name of the Lord,' than the sperrit disappeared; but they went on to the end, and Mr. Reeve's ghost was never seen no more."

"And so," I observed, after having been so long a patient listener—"and so you suppose the spirit was laid in Pit Pond?"

"You may judge for yourself," replied the shepherd, "by what I tells you. That pond in Mr. Reeve's lifetime was as clear as cristial. The very first evening as he was laid, one of the hinds, who didn't know nothing about where the sperrit had been exercised to, driv the cattle down to the pond to drink as usual; not one of 'em would touch the water, not with their hoofs even, but lowed and turned away their heads, and come right back; and the next day the pond come over all green—thick and matted—and so it is to this hour. That's all I know; but it's getting an old story now, and people don't take so much notice of it as they did. However, sir, you may believe that I haven't told you a word but what's been told me for true."

Superstitions and Traditions.

THE pedigree of Superstition is easily traced. She is the offspring of Ignorance and Fear, and has fully developed with her growth the qualities of both her parents. She has unfortunately been very long-lived, and it is almost a question, whether she will ever die, Tradition, her daughter (whose sire was Custom), sustaining her existence with a devotion more than commonly filial. Superstition is a hag that always rides in darkness, but we occasionally, even now, get glimpses of her flight, and the time is not so very far gone by since she was a constant guest, not only in the habitation of the poor, but in the palaces of kings also. Napoleon's Red Man, the Black Huntsman of Fontainebleau, the Spectre of the Tuileries, and other examples nearer home, demonstrate the great unwillingness of Superstition to shift her ground when once she gets into high places; while there is scarcely any one we meet, of our own or of a lower degree, who has not some tradition to tell, in which an implicit belief in an inexplicable

superstition is the unalterable feature. I have myself a few stories of this kind to tell, but confine the present subject to certain details of belief and observance.

Let me begin with a singular account of a very curious people, the Aparctians, of whom I meet with a description in the "Dictionnaire Infernal," of M. J. Collin de Plancy, a somewhat rare and rather remarkable volume. The Aparctians, as their name implies, inhabit the frozen north. They are transparent as crystal, and their feet are as sharp and narrow as skates, a peculiarity which enables them to get over the ground—or rather the ice—at a most tremendous pace. Their beards are long, but they wear them at the end of the nose instead of the chin, which makes it probable that they may be icicles. They have no tongue, but in its place they clatter musically with their teeth, which are not separated from each other, but form two solid pieces. They never go out of doors in the daytime (perhaps the icy caverns, in which they dwell, have no doors), and the perpetuation of their race is ensured by drops of perspiration, which congeal and become Aparctians (a simple and natural process, when once the necessary perspiration is obtained). That all things in the habits of this people may be conformable, they worship a white bear. M. de Plancy's authority states, that they are not often met with,—which is probable.

From the Pole to the Equator is a long stride, but the local colour produces similar effects. What the Aparctians are to northern wanderers, the race called Tibalang are to the native inhabitants of Borneo and Sumatra, with only the difference between a past and a present existence. The Tibalangs are phantoms, which the aborigines believe they see hovering over the tops of certain very old trees, in which they are persuaded that the souls of their ancestors have taken up their abodes. They describe them as of gigantic stature, with long hair, small feet, painted bodies, and outstretched wings of enormous size,—not very unlike the Vampire bat, magnified by superstitious dread.

But there is no need to visit hyperborean regions, or to voyage between the tropics in search of the preternatural, when a steamer from Southampton can take us in twelve hours to the coast of Brittany; where, if we carefully look up the traditions of the inhabitants, we may find the means of filling a tolerably large wallet with the materials which travellers are commonly said to dispense so freely. Abundant in all parts of the ancient Duchy, there is no district in which traditions are more deeply rooted than in the department of Finistère,—so deeply, that it may be many years yet before they are dispersed by the railway whistle. In the cantons surrounding Morlaix, the popular belief is strong in a race of

demons called Teus. They are of two kinds : one of them is called the Teus-ar-pouliet, and the other the Buguel Nos ; both are of a beneficent nature. The Teus-ar-pouliet usually presents himself under the form of a dog, a cow, or some other domestic animal, being, I suppose, unwilling to affright or astonish the natives by assuming a less familiar shape, though I must confess it would astonish me very much to see a cow attempt to iron my shirts, or sweep up the kitchen. Like Milton's lubber-fiend, however, or the Scottish brownie, this friendly spirit does all the household drudgery when everybody is gone to bed—which is the reason, perhaps, why the Breton cottages are the dirtiest in Europe. The services of the Buguel Nos, on the other hand, are rendered out of doors, and the shape in which he appears is human, with this peculiarity in his stature, which is gigantic, that it increases as he approaches. He is only to be seen where cross-roads meet, between midnight and two in the morning. When the belated peasant calls upon him for aid, he comes forth dressed in a long white mantle, which he throws over the suppliant ; who, safe beneath its folds, listens to the terrific grating of the wheels of the devil's chariot, as it crashes along the highway, to the accompaniment of fearful shrieks and dismal howls ; or it may be that he hides from the Carriguel-ar-ancou, or death-cart, which is covered with white cloth and driven furiously by skeletons. Sometimes in lonely

places, at the foot of some Menhir (the long, upright, Druidical stone), the peasant suddenly comes upon a party of those unearthly washerwomen, the *Ar-cannerez-nos*, or Singers of the Night; who compel him to assist them in wringing out their clothes, and woe betide him if he twists the linen differently from them, as at once they fall on him and break both his arms. This is not a country where Falstaff would have liked to be a night-walker; for, even participation in the amusements of its goblins is compulsory. There is one particular class of dwarfs, called *Courils*, or *Poul-piquets*, who inhabit the *Dolmens* (the Druidical stones arranged in tabular form), and whose pleasure it is to caper on the heath by moonlight, pounce upon the wayfarer, and oblige him to join in their dance, never suffering him to stop until, overcome by fatigue, he falls to the ground a corpse. Less malevolent than the *Courils*, is a family of dwarfs, about a foot high, who roam through the vast caverns that lie beneath the ruins of the old castle of Morlaix, making music with their hammers on large copper basins. These dwarfs are gold-diggers, who spread their treasure in the sun to dry. The peasant who modestly extends his palm, receives from them a handful of the precious metal; but he who provides himself with a sack, intending to fill it, is cruelly beaten and driven away. Treasure-trove in Brittany is surrounded by many uncertainties. In the dis-

trict of Lesnaven, immense hoards are guarded by demons, who take the shape, sometimes of an old man or woman, sometimes of a black poodle. Having discovered the locality—which is equivalent to catching your hare—you must silently make a deep hole in the ground ; the thunder will roar, the lightning will flash, meteors will shoot through the air ; and, amidst the riot of the discordant elements, you will hear the clanking of chains ; but, keep an undaunted heart, persevere in your toil, and you will at last be rewarded by discovering an enormous lump of gold, or silver. If you chance to utter a single exclamation while raising the treasure to the surface, it is all over with you : it sinks, and is seen no more. On Palm Sunday, during the singing of the Mass, the demons are forced to make an exhibition of their metallic wealth, though they artfully disguise its value under the appearance of leaves, stones, and bits of coal. But you are perfectly up to this dodge ; and, if you can succeed in sprinkling these objects with holy water, or even in touching them with some other consecrated thing, they turn into gold, and you may fill your pockets as conscientiously as if you were a Royal-British Bank director.

I know not whether the demon called Jan-gant-e-tan (John and his fire) be a treasure-fiend or not, but there is some probability in the belief that he delights in confounding treasure-seekers. It is his habit to turn out at night, and spreading

forth the five fingers of his right hand, which blaze like torches, to whirl them round with inconceivable velocity, and run with all his speed, until he bogs the unhappy wretch who follows, and leaves him in utter darkness, amid screams of derisive laughter.

In the neighbourhood of Plougasnou, there is still practised a species of divination, the future being predicted by weather-wise sorcerers, who interpret the motion of the sea and the rush of the waves as they break upon the shore. These diviners fall on their knees and worship the planet Venus when she rises. Others raise an altar in some lonely spot and place on it several small copper coins which, when the evening mass is ended, they grind to dust. This powder, taken in a glass of wine, cider, or brandy, makes him who drinks it invincible in the wrestling-match or the race: it is just possible that the liquor alone might answer the same purpose. More poetical than dram-drinking is the custom of the maidens of Plougasnou. There is a small chapel in a field that overlooks the coast, whither they repair to hang up their shorn tresses, a sacrifice which they make in the hope of securing the safe return of a sailor lover or the recovery of some dear friend who is sick. A different custom prevails at Croizic, where a high rock hangs over the shore, the approach to which is by a gentle grassy slope. The women of the country and the unmarried

girls dress themselves in all their bravery, and with their hair floating over their shoulders and adorned with freshly-gathered flowers, rush up the slope, and, stretching out their arms, raise their eyes to heaven, and sing in chorus :—

“Sea-mew, sea-mew,
Send back our husbands and lovers true.”

(Goëlans, goëlans !
Ramenez-nous nos maris et nos amans.)

The sea-mew is a bird of good omen to the people on the coast of Morlaix. A small species called Tarak, white, with red beak and feet, and a black spot on the head, appears in April and goes away in September. The period of its arrival is considered the commencement of the season of fine weather. Its perpetual cry is “Quit ! quit ! quit !” the synonym in Bas-breton for “Go ! go ! go !” The constant prayer of the women on these coasts is for the safety of their husbands : at Roscoff they have a practice of sweeping the chapel of the Holy Union after Mass, after which they kneel down and blow the dust in the direction the boats have gone, hoping by this means to ensure a favouring gale. In the little island of Sein, which is but the prolongation of Cape Raz, the doors of the cottages are never closed but when a tempest threatens. When the first whistling of the wind that announces the storm is heard, the girls and women cry : “Shut the doors quickly !

Listen to the Crierien, the whirlwind follows them!" These Crierien are the shadows, the skeleton forms of shipwrecked men, who, weary of being tossed to and fro in the stormy air, call earnestly for burial. At Guingamp, when the body of a drowned man cannot be found, a lighted taper is fixed in a loaf of bread, which is then abandoned to the retreating current; where the loaf stops, they expect to discover the body.

No people are more superstitious than the Bretons in all that concerns the dead. In the district of St. Pol de Leon, if the inhabitants see a stranger treading on the graves in the churchyard, they call out: "Quitte à ha lesse divan va anasun," literally: "Begone from above my dead!" In the country round about Lesnaven they never sweep a house at night; not merely on account of the presumed services of the Buguel Nos, but because they believe that sweeping brings bad luck, and that the movement of the broom disturbs the dead who walk there. They say that on the eve of All Souls there are more dead assembled in every house than there are grains of sand on the seashore. To provide for their wants that night, they prepare quantities of pancakes. The presence of the unseparated dead has its effect on the continuance of tempests. At Quimper they think that storms never subside till the bodies of those who have been drowned are cast on shore. On the chances of life and death,

they believe that two ravens are attached to each house, and predict the several issues. Birth and marriage have their superstitions as well as the closing scene. At Carnac, when a child is taken to be baptized, a bit of black thread is tied round its neck to prevent the spells that might otherwise be thrown upon it; and at the christening festival a woman never allows her child to be handed across the table. For herself, when she leaves the church after marriage, it is the custom at the same place that she should be presented with a large branch of laurel, loaded with apples, and ornamented with ribbons; at the end of the branch a live bird is fastened by a wedding favour, and on reaching the churchyard wall the ribbon is detached and the bird set at liberty. To remind a bride of her domestic duties, a distaff with some flax is presented to her on the same occasion, and she spins it off before she takes any share in the festivities of the day. At Scaër two tapers are lighted at the moment the marriage ceremony is ended: one of them is set before the husband, the other before the wife; the taper that burns the palest, indicates which of the two is to die first. At Kerneval there is a very odd custom: the bride on the night of her wedding is supplied with nuts to amuse herself with during the hours of darkness! While on the subject of marriage I may mention a very generally received superstition which is not confined to Brittany. The choice of

the fourth finger of the left hand for the wedding ring arose from the belief that a nerve proceeded from it, which communicated directly with the heart. It was thought that the moment when the husband placed the ring on his bride's finger was that which had the greatest influence on their after-lives. If the ring stopped on the finger before it reached the first joint, the wife would rule the roast; but if he passed it on at once to its right place, the mastery remained with him. Some brides have been so impressed by this tradition that they have made it a point to crook their fourth finger at this part of the marriage ceremony, so that the ring shall stick in the way.

In many parts of Brittany they keep a very watchful eye over the morals of the young women. The fountain of Bodilis, near Landividian, is famous as an ordeal to test propriety of conduct. The pin which fastens the habit-shirt is dropped into the water, and if it reach the bottom with the point downwards, the girl is freed from all suspicion; if, on the contrary, it turn the other way and sinks head-foremost, her reputation is irretrievably damaged. The fountain of Baranton witnesses a more harmless experiment. It is one of those springs which boil up when a fragment of metal is thrown in, and the children are in the habit of gathering round its brink, and saying to it as they stoop over the water, "Smile, fountain of Baranton, and I will give you a pin!" There

is scarcely a fountain in Brittany that is not consecrated by some religious monument. In times of great drought, the villagers go to them in procession to pray for rain. Such an occurrence took place as late as the month of August, 1835, when all the inhabitants of Kon-Kored (The Fairies' Valley), near Montfort, proceeded to a neighbouring fountain with banners and crosses, chanting canticles to the music of the church-bells, and the curate, who headed the procession, blessed the spring, dipped in the holy-water brush, and sprinkled the water on the ground. What came of the ceremony is not recorded.

Amongst the ordinary Breton superstitions, the following may be cited :—He who eats the heart of an eel, warm from the body, is supposed to be at once endowed with the gift of prophecy. (If this were known on the turf, how many an eel-pieman might win the Derby!) A man whose hair curls naturally is sure, they say, to be beloved by everybody (a very serviceable belief if the negroes could have the benefit of it in the United States and elsewhere). Throughout Finistère the peasants makes a point of not eating cabbage on Saint Stephen's day, because the proto-martyr is said to have concealed himself from his persecutors in a field of cabbages. They suppose that if butter is offered to Saint Hervé (whoever he may have been), their cattle are safe

from wolves, because the saint, stricken with blindness, was once led about by a wolf. They also entertain the notion that foxes will never enter a hen-roost that is sprinkled with the water in which pig's chitterlings have been boiled ; but it is not set forth that any of the Breton saints were ever remarkably addicted to pig's chitterlings, though, without doubt, some of them were.

Divination, by all kinds of processes, is common in Brittany. It is accomplished by means of needles:—Five-and-twenty new needles are put into a plate, water is poured over them, and as many needles as cross each other, so many are the diviner's enemies. To know how long a person will live, a fig-leaf is gathered, and the question asked is written with the finger upon it. If the leaf dries up quickly afterward, a speedy death ensues ; if slowly, then a long life. The mole, famous always for working in the dark, lends himself very much to the practice of divination, all sorts of sage conclusions being inferred from the aspect of his entrails. He is also considered invaluable as a remedy in many parts of France, where the use of the mole-fied hand (*la main tanpée*), in which a live mole has been squeezed to death, is the medium resorted to ; the slightest touch with this hand, while it is yet warm from contact with the animal, cures the toothache and also the colic. If the foot of a mole is wrapped in a laurel-leaf and put into a

horse's mouth, he immediately takes fright. There is a curious magnetic sympathy, apparently, between moles and horses, for if a black horse be sponged over with the water in which a mole has been boiled, the beast will immediately turn white. There is also an alleged sympathy between men and bees; and in some districts of Brittany it is believed that if the hard-working insects are not informed of the events which interest their masters, nothing goes right afterwards about the house. It is on this account that when any one in a family dies, the peasants fasten a bit of black cloth to the hive, or a bit of red if a marriage takes place. The French, as we know, are not first-rate sportsmen—certain devices not commonly practised in England may, therefore, be allowed them in the pursuit of game. Thus, in the Berrichon—though George Sand says nothing about it—some artful dodgers mix the juice of henbane with the blood of a leveret, and having anointed their gaiters therewith, expect that all the hares in the neighbourhood will be attracted towards the wearer of the gaiters.

The kingfisher is held in great estimation in many parts of France, on account of certain supposed qualities. It is considered to be a natural weathercock, which, when hung up by the beak, will turn its breast to the quarter whence the wind blows. The kingfisher is also said to be endowed with the precious gift of enriching its pos-

essor, or preserving harmony in families, and of imparting beauty to women who wear its feathers. The kingfisher's fame has travelled into Tartary, where the inhabitants almost adore the bird. They eagerly collect its plumage, and, throwing the feathers into a vase of water, preserve those that float, believing that it is quite sufficient for a woman to touch one of them to make her love the wearer. A Tartar, if he be fortunate enough to own a kingfisher, carefully preserves the beak, claws, and skin when it dies, and puts them in a purse; as long as he carries these relics on his person, he is secure against any misfortune.

Some of the preceding superstitions have, probably, become merely traditional, and to the latter class we must assign the belief in the good traveller's walking-stick (*le bâton du bon voyageur*), the wondrous properties of which, and the manner of its construction, are described as follows in the "Secrets Merveilleux du Petit Albert":—"Take," says the necromantic teacher, "a thick and straight branch of elder, and after extracting the pith, put a ferrule at one end; then substitute for the pith the eyes of a young wolf, the tongue and the heart of a dog, three green lizards, and the hearts of three swallows, all of them reduced to powder by the heat of the sun" (a fragrant process) "between two papers sprinkled with saltpetre. On the top of this powder place seven leaves of vervain, gathered on the eve of Saint

John the Baptist, together with a stone of divers colours, which is found in the nest of the lapwing, and put whatever kind of knob to the stick that you fancy. You may then rest assured that this stick will not only preserve you from robbers, mad dogs, wild beasts, and dangers of all sorts, but also procure you a good supper and a night's lodging wherever you choose to stop." Such a walking-stick would have been of infinite service to the Gallician beggar, of whom the *Sieur Boguet* (an old acquaintance of ours) tells a singular story in his "Treatise on Sorcerers." This beggar was the proprietor of one of those imps called the *Cambion* (or *Devil's-brat*), the natural child of those two very agreeable demons, the *Incubus* and the *Succubus*—a creature of extraordinary weight, that always drains its nurses dry, and never, by any chance, gets fat. The beggar, with the imp in his arms, made his appearance one day in a certain town in Gallicia, and seemed so much encumbered by his charge, in endeavouring to ford a deep stream which ran through the place, that a gentleman on horseback, who was passing by, took compassion on him, and offered to convey the child across. He accordingly set it on his horse, and plunged into the stream ; but the little demon was so heavy that the animal sank, and the cavalier had to swim for his life. A short time afterwards, the beggar, who had run away on witnessing this catastrophe, was captured,

and he acknowledged that the child was a Cambion, and had been very useful to him in his calling, and turned people's minds towards almsgiving. What became of the Cambion is not stated, but I believe the beggar was burnt. These heavy little devils are the same as the German Wechselkinder, the changelings of the old English ballad.

The mention of almsgiving recalls a somewhat ludicrous story of modern date, where a most inopportune miracle was wrought. The well-known French missionary, Father Bridaine, was always poor, for the simple reason that he gave away everything he had. One evening he asked for a night's lodging of the curate of a village through which he passed, and the worthy man having only one bed, shared it with him. At daybreak Father Bridaine arose, according to custom, and went to say his prayers at the neighbouring church. Returning from this sacred duty, he met a beggar, who asked an alms. "Alas, my friend, I have nothing!" said the good priest, mechanically putting his hand in his breeches pocket, where, to his astonishment, he found something hard wrapped up in paper, which he knew he had not left there. He hastily opened the paper, and seeing four crowns in it, cried out that it was a miracle! He gave the money to the beggar, and hastened into the church to return thanks to God. The curate soon after arrived there, and Father

Bridaine related the miracle with the greatest unction ; the curate turned pale, put his hand in his pocket, and in an instant perceived that Father Bridaine, in getting up in the dark, had taken the wrong pair of breeches ; he had performed a miracle with the curate's crowns !

At a period rather more remote, Saint Antide, Bishop of Besançon, was one day walking in the fields, when he met with a very thin, ugly devil, who boasted to the bishop that he had just been committing some sad mischief in one of the churches at Rome.

"Come here, you slave of Satan," exclaimed Saint Antide, "and kneel down !"

The demon obeyed, placed himself on all-fours, and the saint getting astride on his back, ordered him to fly off immediately to Rome. Arrived there, the bishop put everything to rights in the dilapidated church, and then returned to his diocese by the same conveyance, not forgetting, however, as he dismounted, to bestow a hearty kick on the demon, which sent him howling back to the unblissful regions.

There are many similar stories related of demons who have been serviceable to mortal masters ; generally speaking, however, against the grain. Of the most usual kind was the Familiar, who was always at hand. Bodin relates that, about two years before he published his "Demonomania" (4to, Paris, 1587), there was a

nobleman at Villars-Costerets, who had one of these imps confined in a ring, which he had at his command, to do what he pleased with, and treat exactly like a slave, having bought it at a very high price from a Spaniard. But the nobleman, as commonly happened, came to grief through this Familiar, for the spirit was possessed with an invincible habit of telling lies ; and on one occasion, being very much enraged, the nobleman threw his ring into the fire, thinking thereby to burn the demon ; it was, however, the creature's native element, it released him from thralldom, and the demon thereupon tormented his former master until he drove him mad. The witch's Familiar was almost invariably a toad ; but a frog was made to figure in that capacity only a few years ago with very fatal consequences. The history of the occurrence is a sad example of the effects of superstitious fear. It happened in the commune of Bussy-en-Oth, in the department of the Aube, in France, in the year 1841. A young man of that village had been passing the day enjoying the very French amusement of fishing for frogs. He had caught a great many, and placed them alive in a bag. On his way home he saw a peasant walking slowly on the road before him, the large half-open pocket of whose coat invited the fisherman to the perpetration of a practical joke. Accordingly, as he passed the peasant, he managed, unperceived, to

slip one of the frogs into his pocket. The peasant unsuspectingly walked on, reached his cottage, and, tired with the labours of the day, soon afterwards went to rest, throwing his clothes as usual on his bed. In the middle of the night, Jacquemin—that was the peasant's name—was awakened by feeling something cold crawling over his face, and uttering indistinct cries ; it was, of course, the frog that had crept out of Jacquemin's pocket, and had paused on its journey to croak. Jacquemin, who was of an exceedingly timorous nature, lay as still as death till his nocturnal visitor departed, nothing doubting that he had been visited by a spirit.

The man's character for simplicity was so generally known, that people were always playing tricks upon him ; and on the very next morning after the preceding visitation, one of his friends came into his cottage, and told him that his old uncle, who lived at Sens, had just died, and advised him to set off and claim his share of the inheritance. Jacquemin, on hearing this news, made no more ado, but at once set out with his wife for Sens, distant eight leagues from where he lived. Arrived at the house of the supposed deceased, the first person he saw was his uncle sitting in his arm-chair. Anybody else would have perceived that he had been duped, but this poor fellow, firmly believing that his uncle was dead, was seized with sudden terror, and dragging his

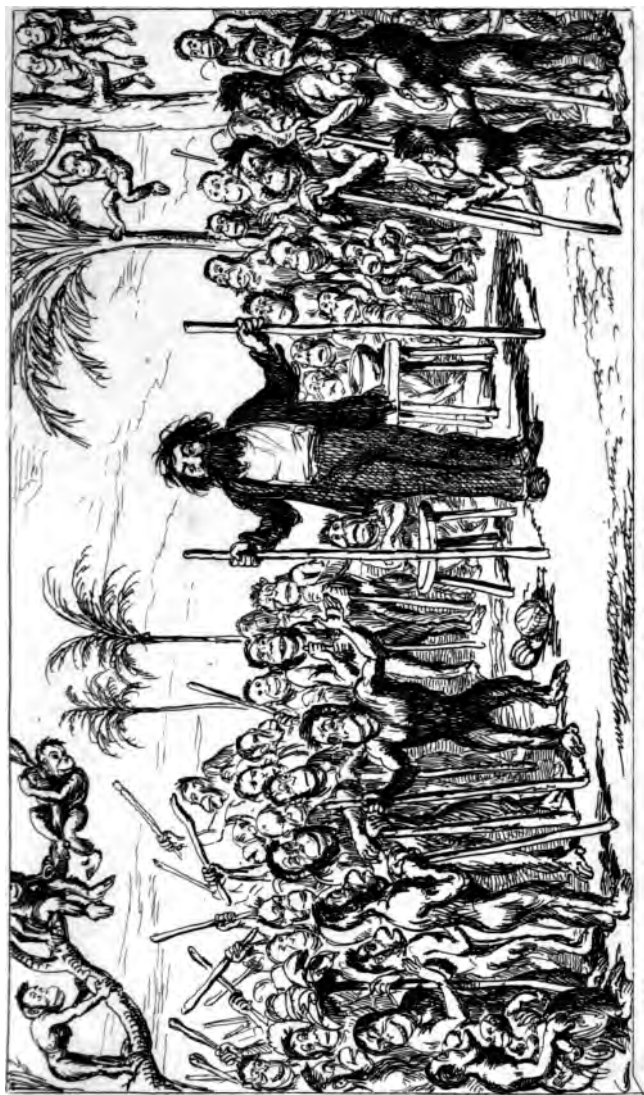
wife out of the house, set off again to Bussy, without giving time for a word of explanation. In the meantime, the frog had not abandoned his cottage, but had taken refuge in a hole in the flooring, from whence, every now and then, it uttered dismal croaks. Jacquemin, convinced that he had seen his uncle's ghost, fancied that these noises were made by the spirit, and the agony he underwent became insupportable. A prey to the direst fear, Jacquemin at last hung himself one morning in his hayloft. On the following day, his wife, despairing for the loss of her husband, threw herself into a pond, and was found drowned—a double suicide, caused by an imbecile superstition.



Facsimile of an old woodcut in "Round About our Coal Fire," 1718.

Monsters.

WITHOUT accusing Nature of ever being unmindful of a purpose, I think I may be allowed to say that she sometimes indulges in vagaries, the motive for which it is not always very easy to comprehend. Her creations are occasionally so strange, that one is compelled now and then to inquire the object of them: and it will also happen that one has frequently some time to wait before a perfectly satisfactory answer can be obtained. I do not ask why the Scolopendræ cannot do without their hundred legs; why the Chirotes, those very small Saurians, indulge in such



Mantras discussed by the Grand Oubé

generally unpleasant—on the destinies of nations or their rulers.

I must preface such an account as I mean to give of the monsters about which I have lately been reading, by saying that I quite rely upon the authorities I quote from ; that is to say, I believe that they believed all they asserted ; and where so much belief is involved, it is rather an invidious task to attempt to set everybody right. My doubting, therefore, will be done, like Ariel's spiriting, gently. As the French say, *Entrons en matière*—let us begin.

In the "Traditions Tématologiques" of Monsieur Berger de Xivrey (Paris, 1836), a commentary is given on the text of a Latin manuscript of the tenth century, intituled by him, *De Monstris et Belluis* (Of Monsters and Great Beasts), which belonged to the Marquis of Rosanbo. This work, which owes its origin to the eighth chapter of the sixteenth book of "The City of God," by St. Augustine, is supplemental to the "Fables of Phædrus," which occupies the first portion of the manuscript. From this part of the volume compiled by Monsieur Berger de Xivrey, I take some of the following descriptions.

Under the head of *Cynocephali* (Dog-headed), is this (translated) passage:—"Cynocephali are also said to be produced in India, which have the heads of dogs, and every word which they utter

they corrupt by barking. And these people imitate beasts rather than men, by eating their meat raw." The most detailed account of "these people" is given by Ctesias, the Greek physician, who, in his "History of India," says :—" In these mountains it is said there are men who have the heads of dogs, and whose garments are made of the skins of wild beasts. They have no language, but they bark like dogs, and understand each other. Their teeth are longer than those of dogs; their nails resemble the nails of those animals, but they are longer and rounder. They inhabit the mountains as far as the river Indus. They are black, and very just" (in their dealings), "like the Indians, with whom they trade." (A curious sensation it must excite, the appearance of a dog-headed customer!) "They comprehend what the latter say to them, but they can only reply by barking, and by signs which they make with their hands and fingers, like the deaf and dumb. They feed upon raw flesh. The Indians call them Calystrians, which signifies in Greek, Cynocephales." Ælian makes some additions to this account. He tells us that the Calystrians "eat the flesh of wild animals, which they easily capture because they are very light of foot. When they have taken their prey, they kill it, cut it up in pieces, and roast it, not with fire, but in the sun" (rather a hot sun). "They have flocks of sheep and goats, and drink their milk" (lapping it, pro-

bably, after the fashion of other dog-headed animals).

The Imperial Library in Paris possesses a manuscript copy of a poem by Manuel Philæus, bearing the same title as Ælian's work, *Περὶ Ζώων Ἰδιότητος* ("On the Peculiarities of Animals"), in which a Cynocephalus, very carefully drawn and coloured, is represented like a man hairy all over, except his hands, feet, elbows, knees, and head. The latter resembles that of a setter, and the nails of the feet are elongated like veritable talons. The figure is upright and well-proportioned; in the left hand he carries a hare by the hind legs, and in his right the stick with which he knocks down his game.

Respecting these Cynocephali, Sir John Maundevile, the celebrated traveller, who always swallows Pliny's lies with infinite relish, discourses as follows:—"In an island clept Nacemara, alle the men and women have houndes' hedes; and they were clept Cynocephali; and they were full resonable, and of gode undirstondynge, saf that thei worschipe an ox for here" (their) "God. And also everyche of hem" (them) "werethe an ox of gold or of sylver in his forhed, in tokene that they loven well here God. * * * Thei ben grete folk and wel fyghtynge; and they have a gret Targe, that covereth all the body, and a spere in here hond to fighte with. And zif thei taken any man in battayle, anon thei eten him."

Somewhat akin to these dog-headed gentlemen, though with more humanity in their countenances, are the people of whom Sir John also speaks when describing the empire of Prester John. "In that Desert," he says, "were many wylde men, that were hidouse to looken on ; for thei were horned ; and they speken nought, but they gronten, as Pigges."

Writers on natural history in former days did not draw such nice distinctions as science now requires ; and, therefore, it is not surprising to find the attributes of various families of the Simian race united under one, the Cynocephalus doing duty as well for the true baboon as for the African and Oriental varieties of the Chimpanzee, or Troglodytes Niger. Of the habits of these quadrumana, when tamed, enough has been recorded : how they sit at table, eat and drink (as people say) "like Christians," and exhibit other accomplishments, more or less polite ; but it is their savage state which more closely allies them to monsters. Think of the Pongo, a dog-headed "party," which in its native African forests attains the stature of a giant, and goes about with a tremendous club in his hand, knocking down elephants (so Battel says)—a fellow whom you can't manage to capture alive, since he has the strength and agility of ten ordinary men ! Spring-heeled Jack, the British monster of his day, was nothing to this Pongo of Sierra Leone, who, ac-

cording to Purchas, is stout enough to turn the scale against two men of common size. "On the shores of the river Gambia," says Frazer (cited by Buffon), "the Pongos are larger and fiercer than in any other part of Africa; the negroes are greatly afraid of them, and dare not go into the woods for fear of being attacked by these animals (who invite them to a kind of duel, offering them the choice of sticks to fight with.)"

These creatures are held—and very justly held—to be extremely maleficent, but in the parts of Nubia between the White and Blue Niles, they bear an entirely opposite character, if we are to credit the statement of Abdallah ben Ahmed ben Solaim, an Arabic author, a native of the city of Assouan, who endows them with the properties of genii. "In the district between the two rivers there dwells a people called Kersa, occupying a spacious territory fertilized by the waters of the Nile. In seed-time, each inhabitant brings all the grain he has, and traces an outline proportioned to the quantity he has to sow. Having thrown a little of the grain into the four corners of the marked enclosure, he places the rest in the middle with a vessel of beer, and then withdraws; returning the next day, he finds the beer gone and the seed sown. In like manner, at the season of harvest, the farmer (who must be a very lazy fellow) takes a few ears of wheat, and places them, with the beer, in a convenient spot, and

next day discovers that his corn is all cut and placed in shocks. The same method is employed in winnowing the grain, but if weeding his field a blade of wheat is accidentally included, the whole of the corn is torn up in the course of the night." This beer-drinking African brownie is conjectured by Monsieur Étienne Quatremère, who tells the story, and does not doubt it, to be only a very intelligent monkey !

Egypt is the habitat of the Troglodytes, or dwellers in caves, of Sir John Maundevile ; but they differ, in the article of diet at least, from the Troggs of the Arabian historian, though our own famed traveller has no suspicion that they can be other than men. "Thei eten," he says, "flesche of serpentes ; and thei eten but litille, and thei speken nought ; but thei hissen as serpentes don." With regard to the barking propensities of the Cynocephali, we learn from Allamand that a certain Mr. Harwood possessed a female ourang-outang, given him by the King of Ashantee, "which pronounced frequently and successively the syllables yaa-hou, accenting and dwelling very forcibly on the last."

The writers whose forte was the prodigious, did not confine themselves to the enumeration of accidental monstrosities. It was not sufficient for them to meet with an occasional *lusus naturæ* ; they dealt in such commodities wholesale. Thus, on certain eastern shores, the whereabouts of

which is unfortunately not specified, "dwelt a race of men fifteen feet high, whose ears were so enormous, that when they lay down at night they wrapped themselves completely up in them." The narrator of this marvel adds, "that when they encountered strangers they fled rapidly away through the desert, with their wonderful ears erect." Sir John Maundevile matches these large-eared people in the following passage : "And in another Yle ben folk of foul fasceon and schapp, that have the lippe above the mouthe so gret, that when thei slepen in the sonne, thei keverin all the face with that lippe."

The Sciapodes, or umbrella-legged, were a people of Africa (or India) according to Pliny, Solinus, St. Augustine, Isidore of Seville, and others, who, to shelter themselves from the burning rays of a too tropical sun, lie on their backs, and holding up their leg (they have but one), make it serve the purpose of a large parasol. They are described as being very swift of foot (*sunt celerrimæ naturæ*), though how they get over the ground with their solitary leg is not stated. Sir John the Traveller says : "In that contree ben folk, that han but a foot ; and thei gon so fast, that it is marvaylle ; and the foot is so large, that it shadoweth all the body agen the sonne whanne thei woll lye and reste hem."

As surprising, in their way, as the Sciapodes, were the Acephali, or headless men (there are a

good many of them in office at the present time), dwellers on the Brixontes, a tributary of the Nile, whose additional peculiarity was that of having their eye or eyes (usually it was but one) in the shoulder, breast, or stomach. Conrad Wolffahrt, a learned Alsatian philologist, who Hellenized his name into Lycosthenis, published a volume of "Prodigiorum" (Basel, 1557), in which are depicted the portraits of all the monsters which ever did exist, or could be supposed to have existed. The headless, double-headed, one-eyed, many-eyed, four-legged, no-legged, double-bodied, horse-faced, pig-faced, bird-faced—every variety of monstrosity, in short, which it is possible to imagine—find a place in this recondite work. I will describe a few from the engravings, taken at random. At page six hundred and sixty-eight is a kind of centaur, the upper part of whose body is that of a man, the lower that of a horse, but without a tail; he has two pairs of arms, the superior pair terminating in webbed claws, the lower in human fingers; he has a moustache and biforked beard, the ears of a horse, a good crop of well-dressed hair, and his countenance has a mild and rather agreeable expression, which bears out the statement in the text, that he is friendly to man (*amici sunt hominum et mulierum*). At page six hundred and sixty-seven is a Tartarian monster, who for the convenience of wearing the neck and head of a dragon, has placed his own human face in the

very middle of his body, and to assist his motion, has added a pair of wings, which grow out of his hips ; in all other respects this Tartar (who is not often caught) resembles a naked man. He is said to be most ferocious and inimical to the human race (*animalia sunt ferocissima, et hominibus inimicissima*), and he looks it. At page six hundred and sixty-five is a naked gentleman with a cat's head, said to have been born at Basle ; at page six hundred and fifty-six, another with the legs and curly tail of a Newfoundland dog, a native of Cleisdorff, in Germany. At page six hundred and forty-two is a monster whose two hindlegs are equine, with solid hoofs ; his near foreleg is only a stump, which he brandishes in the air as if he had just escaped from a trap, and his off foreleg is the foot of a human being ; his tail is very like the Prince of Wales's feathers ; his mane is plaited, his ears droop, his eye is perfectly round, and his lips are hippopotamian. Job Fincel, who stands godfather to the greater part of these wonderful creatures, assigns a town in Pomerania as the locality of this individual. At page six hundred and forty, the author represents a domestic cat of his own, two of whose legs curl round and round like tails, while the tail itself is convoluted like an ingenious piece of fireworks. Caspar Peucerus is the authority, at page six hundred and thirty-three, for an animal of a monstrous and horrible form (*aspectu tetro et horrido*), whose right arm

stands out stiff from the place where its right ear ought to be, while the left arm grows from the hip ; the feet terminate in scaly claws. At page six hundred, is a very unfortunate-looking monster with only one leg and no arms at all ; it somehow contrives to stand upright, and there it remains fixed, like a milestone. At page five hundred and ninety-six, sits an elderly-looking personage, whose intellectual forehead is twice as high as the rest of his face, and whose legs, reversing the usual order, are twisted upwards, so that his feet rise above his shoulders, one of them tucked under his arm, the other sustained in front. The bowel department of this gentleman is fully developed, like the mechanism of an open clock, but he appears tolerably comfortable notwithstanding. Not to cumber these pages with too many monstrosities, I shall only describe one more. This is a web-footed and web-handed character of noble parentage (*natus est ex honestis et nobilibus parentibus*), out of the corners of whose eyes flames seem to dart, and whose nose takes the shape of a long, curved horn ; a forked tail is amongst its appendages, but the most remarkable parts of its conformation are six dogs' heads, which severally ornament the knees, the bend of the arms, and the arm-pits. An extra pair of eyes is set in the middle of the stomach.

For the rest, there are animals which have two bodies and only one head between them ; others that indulge in a multiplicity of arms and legs ;

parties with horns growing in impossible places, and tails that issue from their eyes, ears, and elbows; some of them very fierce-looking, some exceedingly gentle, and all of them excessively ridiculous. One thing is observable in the collection; each engraving does duty a dozen times over, —whether the original flourished in the time of the Roman Maxentius or the German Maximilian.

That there were once black monsters not less than two-and-twenty feet high (*“duodeviginti pedes altitudinis capiunt,”* says the Rosanbonian manuscript), the very delectable romance of the noble and valiant king, Alexander the Great, informs us in the following words: “Alexander entering the country towards the east, found there people of horrible aspect—full of all manner of evil ways—who ate all kinds of meat and flesh of man when they could get it. The king, having considered their bad customs, and thinking that if they multiplied through the world, people would be misled by their pernicious example, caused them to be assembled, together with their wives and children, and took them out of the east and sent them to the northern parts between two mountains. He then prayed to our Lord” (like a good Christian, as Alexander the Great—Great Ammon’s son—undoubtedly was), “to make these mountains draw close together, till they stood at only twelve feet from each other. Then” (this

prayer being immediately attended to) "Alexander caused gates of iron to be made and covered with asbestos, so that no fire might injure or destroy them. And from that day forward none of these men ever came out of the place wherein he had put them (which is the reason why we never see negroes now-a-days two-and-twenty feet high)."

Of course Maundevile does not leave giants out of his collection, for though he admits that he never saw any, "because that no man comethe to that Yle but zif he be devoured anon," he says that "men have seyn many thymes tho geauntes (who are described as 'fifty Fote long') taken men in the See out of hire Scippes, and broughte hem to lond, two in one hond and two in another, etyng hem goynge, all rawe and alle quyk."

Split men are a variety of the human race only met with now-a-days, in a metaphorical sense, at elections; but Bochart tells us that, in some of the marshy districts of Arabia (a country, by the bye, not over famous for marshes), creatures exist formed like the half of a man split down the middle from head to foot (like a kippered salmon), having only one eye, one arm, one leg, &c. The Arabic name for these beings is Nésnás. Mr. Lane, in his "Notes to the Arabian Nights" (vol. i. p. 37), speaks of this monster, whom he classes, however, amongst the Jinn or Genii, as being found in the woods of El-Yemen, and being endowed with speech. He adds, "It is said that

it is found in Hadramót as well as El-Yemen ; and that one was brought alive to El-Mutawekkil. It resembled a man in form, except that it had but half a face, which was in its breast, and a tail like that of a sheep. The people of Hadramót, it is added, eat it ; and its flesh is sweet. It is only generated in their country. A man who went there asserted that he saw a captured Nésnás, which cried out for mercy, conjuring him by God and himself." For the benefit of those who desire to see what the Nésnás is like, I may mention that there is a drawing of one in the Bodleian Library.

What were termed double and triple-formed men (*genus formæ duplicis et triplicis*) abounded in the olden time. They combined the shapes of man and beast, or of a terrestrial and a marine animal. The Arabian author, Alkazuin, in a treatise on the "Prodigies of Creation," mentions a sea-born creature with a human face, to which he gives the irreverent name of "Old Jew." He describes this individual (one is tempted to think of a Hebrew dealer in marine stores) as having a white beard, the hide of an ox, and being the size of a calf. He comes out of the sea on a Friday, and wanders about till sunset, "leaping like a frog," and then sinks into his native element, following the track of vessels.

To a variety of this species Alkazuin affixes a tail, and tells a humorous, but not very delicate,

story about them. Another Arabian writer, cited by Bochart, speaks of "aquatic females," who, in some respects, differ little from certain of the sex seen at Ramsgate and Margate, during the bathing-season. "Their colour," he says, "is high; they perfectly resemble women,—have long, flowing hair, and charming eyes, full of sprightliness. They speak an unintelligible language, interrupted with immoderate bursts of laughter."

Although it may not be flattering to the Nereids and Tritons of antiquity, I suspect that our friends the Phocidæ, whose countenances closely resemble those of men (Scotchmen in particular), have in a great degree to answer for the descriptions given of those marine deities. If not, they must be content, in spite of their celestial lineage, to be classed amongst monsters. Hear how Pliny discourses of them:—"In the time when Tiberius was Emperour, there came unto him an ambassadour from Ulyssipon, sent of purpose to make a relation that upon their sea-coast there was discovered within a certain hole a sea-goblin, called Triton, sounding a shell like a trumpet or cornet, and that he was in form and shape like those that are commonly painted for Tritons. And as for the Mermaids, called Nereides, it is no fabulous tale that goeth of them; for look how painters draw them, so they are indeed, only their bodie is rough and skaled all over. . . . For such a mermaid was seene, and beheld plainly upon the

same coast, neere to the shore; and the inhabitants dwelling neer heard it a farre off, when it was a dying, to make pitteous mone, and chattering very heavily. . . . Divers knights of Rome testify also to having seen a merman, in every respect resembling a man as perfectly in all parts of the bodie as might be. . . . And they report, moreover, that in the night season he would come out of the sea aboard their ships; but look, upon what part soever he settled, he waied the same downe; and if he rested and continued there anylong time, he would sinke it cleane." John Theodore Jablonsky gives a more particular account than Pliny of this aquatic class ("Universal Dictionary of Arts and Sciences," page six hundred and fifty-eight): "Meer-man, Meer-weib, Meer-minne—that is, Sea-man, Mermaid, or Siren; called by the Indians Ambitiangulo, otherwise Pesiengono, and by the Portuguese Pezz-muger—is found in the seas and in some rivers in the southern parts of Africa and India, and in the Philippine and Molucca islands, Brazil, North America, and in Europe, in the North Sea. Its length is eight spans, its head is oval, and the face resembles that of a man. It has an high forehead, little eyes, a flat nose, and large mouth, but has no chin or ears. It has two arms, which are short, but without joints or elbows" (like the late Miss Biffin), "with hands or paws, to each of which there are four long fingers, which are not very flexible"

(unlike Miss B.), "connected to each other by a membrane like that of the foot of a goose. . . . Their skin is of a brownish-grey colour, and their intestines are like those of a hog. Their flesh is as fat as pork, particularly the upper part of their bodies; and this is a favourite dish with the Indians, broiled upon a gridiron." (Fancy ordering a broiled mermaid at Blackwall!) "It makes a lamentable cry when drawn out of the water" (no wonder, with the gridiron so extremely handy).

Making mermaids a substitute for pork seems common in Africa; for Edward Dapper, in his description of that continent, (page five hundred and eighty-four,) informs us that "In the sea of Angola, mermaids are frequently catch'd which resemble the human species. They are taken in nets and killed by the negroes, and are heard to shriek and cry like women. The inhabitants on that coast eat their flesh, being very fond of it, which they say is much like pork in taste. The ribs of those animals are reckoned a good styptic." (Too much of a styptic to have a mermaid for a rib.) Of the merman genus is also the animal called the Monk-fish. Caspar Peucerus vouches for having seen two of these creatures, "with a human face and a tonsure round his head"—on the first occasion, in fifteen hundred and forty-nine, in the Baltic Sea, not far from Haffnia, and in the following year near Copenhagen.

Father Francis de Pavia says (in the relation

of Captain Uring; London, 1727), that "throughout all the rivers of Zair the mermaid is found, which, from the middle upwards, has some resemblance of a woman: it has breasts, nipples, hands, and arms, but downwards it is altogether fish; its head is round, and the face like that of a calf; a large ugly mouth, little ears, and round full eyes; that he has eat of them divers times, and it tastes not unlike swine's flesh, and the entrails resemble that of a hog, for which reason the natives name it Ngullin-a-masa (the water-sow); but the Portuguese call it Peixe Molker (the woman-fish). Although it feeds on herbs which grow on the river-side, yet it does not go out of the water, but only holds its head out when it feeds. They are taken for the most part in the rainy times, when the waters are disturbed and muddy, and they cannot discern the approach of fishermen; they are caught by striking."

The pretended letter of Alexander the Great to his mother Olympias and his preceptor Aristotle, found in the Latin version of the "Pseudo-Callisthenes," and from which Vincent de Beauvais extracted so much in the fourth book of his "Speculum Historiale," is a complete repertory of monsters. According to this work, which was the delight of the Middle Ages, they beset the path of the Macedonian hero at every step of his progress through India. Alexander begins the list

of his prodigies with an account of a famous crab: "We continued our march until we came to the sea-shore, where, having halted, we saw a crab come out of the briny flood and seize the dead body of a horse, which it carried off. Shortly afterwards, a host of these marine monsters fell upon us, so that we were not able to capture a single crab. The flame of a fire which we lit delivered us from them." This, it must be confessed, was not a very glorious passage-of-arms for the conqueror of the world. The royal Greek continues: "Quitting these places, we moved on for several days, and encountered men who had six feet and three eyes; a little further on we met with dog-headed men, whom we had some difficulty in putting to flight. At last we reached an immense plain, in the midst of which was a great gulf; I threw a bridge across it, and all the army passed over. Thenceforward we were deprived of the light of day, but continuing the march, we arrived at the land of darkness, where the Happy dwell. Here two birds with human faces" (how did he make them out?) "approached me on the wing, saying, 'It is not permitted to thee, O Alexander, to venture further.'" At this announcement the king retraced his steps, and proceeded in a different direction. The conquest of Persia followed, after which Alexander, taking a number of guides, turned towards the north.

“On the ninth day we found ourselves in a forest, called Anaphantus, full of a great number of trees bearing fruit like apples. There were also in this forest men of vast stature, twenty-four cubits in height, with thick necks and hands, and elbows like saws” (a nudge from these giants would be unpleasant). “They advanced upon us. I was very much afflicted at seeing such beings, and ordered that some of them should be seized. We charged them with cries and trumpet-blasts, and they fled from us. I killed three hundred and thirty-two of them” (a statement one may be permitted to doubt), “and lost a hundred and sixty of my own soldiers.”

The next foes whom the Greeks encountered were the inhabitants of a country smiling with verdure, of gigantic size, stout, hairy, and red, with eyes like those of lions. “There were others also, called Ochlotas, without hair, four cubits high, and as broad as the length of a lance; they wore aprons for their only attire. They were very strong, and well disposed to annoy us, but fought only with clubs, killing many of my men. When I perceived this, I caused a great fire to be lit” (as in the battle of the crabs), “and thus we obliged them to retreat. . . . On the following day we went to see the caverns where they dwelt, and found wild beasts chained at the entrances, as high as those dogs which we

call Dandex, but four cubits long, and having each three eyes."

The Melophagi—men bristled like pigs—were Alexander's next opponents. One of these rough-skins was taken prisoner, and, being brought before Alexander, looked at him very impudently; and when the soldiers sought to seize him, he uttered a guttural noise, on which about ten thousand of his companions started out of a marsh. Alexander, however, set the reeds on fire, and they fled, leaving about four hundred prisoners, who, refusing all nourishment, soon died; "they did not speak, but barked like dogs."

Alexander's next adventure was with invisible foes—like the Hâtif, one of the Arabian Jinns, being heard, not seen. "We arrived at the bank of a river on which were trees which rose from the ground on the appearance of the sun, and continued to grow till the sixth hour. At the seventh hour they continued to decrease till they almost disappeared in the ground. Tears dropped from their branches, like those distilled by a weeping fig, of the sweetest and most exquisite odour. I ordered that these trees should be cut, and the tears gathered with sponges. Those who attempted to execute this command were immediately scourged by invisible genii. We could hear the noise of their whips, and saw the

marks on the men's backs, but could not see those who struck. Then a voice addressed me, saying, 'Neither cut nor gather anything. If you do not cease, the whole army will be struck dumb.' Full of terror, I instantly put a stop to our proceedings. In the river I have spoken of were black stones, whose property was to communicate their colour to all who touched them. There were also a great number of water-snakes, and many kinds of fish, which could not be drest with fire, but only cold spring water. A soldier having caught one of these fish, wanted to wash it, and then putting it into some salt, left it there; when he returned, it was done" (and so, perhaps, was the soldier). "On the banks of this river were also birds similar to some we have in Greece; but if anyone ate of them fire issued straightway from his body." Some six-eyed beasts, like wild asses, only twenty cubits long, offered the army no molestation; they had one peculiarity, four out of the six eyes were useless, as they could only see with two.

Headless men with human voices (like the junction of Caliban with Trinculo) were next met with; they were covered with hair, lived upon fish, and were, to a certain extent, polite, offering Alexander truffles, weighing twenty-five pounds each, which they dug up for him.

At the next place they came to, which was on the coast, they heard human voices speaking

Greek, but could not discern the speakers. "Some soldiers unfortunately thought of swimming here; but great crabs seized them and dragged them to the bottom, and we all hastily made for the shore, terror-stricken."

At a stream which they soon afterwards reached, Alexander being hungry, desired his cook to get him something to eat. He took a shell-fish and dipped it into the fountain, to wash it; and as soon as it touched the water it came to life again, and swam away. The cook did not mention this fact until some time afterwards, when Alexander punished him, vexed, without doubt, at having lost his dinner.

At last Alexander's wanderings in the land of wonders came to an end. Two more birds appeared, "which had nothing particular about them, except the eyes of men!" They, also, spoke Greek; the first crying out, "What soil dost thou trample on, O Alexander? That which belongs to God only! Return, wretch, and dare not to approach the land of the Happy! Return, mortal; tread on the earth that is given to thee, and prepare not punishment for thyself and thy companions." The second bird added: "The East calls thee, and victory submits to thy power the kingdom of Porus." Hereupon the birds flew away, and Alexander went to the right-about, ordering the conductors of the she-asses to lead the way. "After journeying for twenty-two days

by the light of the stars, the soldiers heard the voices of the young asses answering their dams, and the army emerged once more into daylight. It was of use, for the men had laden themselves in the dark with many objects which, on examination, they now found to be fine gold." Here ends the letter, and with it my dissertation on Monsters.

The Watcher of the Dead.

There was a man once
Dwelt by a churchyard.— *Winter's Tale.*

SOME years ago it was my chance to reside for a time in a small village in the North Riding of Yorkshire, situated about half-way between the old town of Richmond and the beautiful scenery of the Greta.

The name of the village is Kirkby, known on the maps as Kirkby Ravensworth, to distinguish it from others similarly designated, from being placed near a church, but more familiarly known throughout the country-side as Kirby Hill.

It well deserves the latter nomenclature, for though it stands on one of the spurs of the loftier moors that stretch behind it to the borders of Westmoreland, it forms the most prominent feature in the landscape when seen from the wide valley through which one of the tributaries of the Swale takes its course, with its frequent *becks* and many windings. The old grey church that stands on the brow of the hill is a landmark for miles round, and it is scarcely necessary to

climb to the battlements of the belfry-tower to catch a glimpse of the glittering waters which mark where Whitby lies, at least sixty miles distant.

Except the old church, Kirby Hill has little to recommend it to the lover of the picturesque, for all it consists of is a green of no very great extent, surrounded on three sides by the houses that form the village, and bounded on the fourth by the low churchyard wall. Indeed, were its claims upon the traveller's admiration much greater than they are, it would scarcely obtain a place in his memory while he recalled the woods and rocks of Greta, or the deep gills and foaming torrents which intersect his path as he journeys from Catterick Bridge to Barnard Castle. Of historical association there is not much, the hill being memorable only as the place where Cromwell is said to have planted his cannon when he battered down the proud walls of Ravensworth Castle, whose ivy-covered ruins in the valley beneath have since that day been tenantless, save to owls and daws and the "crannyng wind."

But what the village of Kirby Hill wants in actual beauty or past celebrity, it gains from its isolated position; for in this remote spot still flourished at the time I speak of, undisturbed by any rays of the light of modern philosophy, the superstitious belief and observances of the Middle Ages. Here, on the village green, the morris-dancers still assembled to usher in the

New Year ; here, May was welcomed with all her honours ; here, the yule log merrily burnt, and the cup of firmity passed from hand to hand ; and here, on St. Mark's-eve, the watcher of the dead took his annual stand, to number the spectres of those who were destined to disappear from earth before the year had gone its round.

This last practice, which once was common wherever the Danes or Norsemen had penetrated, has long been peculiar to Yorkshire ; and Brande, in his "Popular Antiquities," speaks of it as follows :—

"It is customary," he says, "in Yorkshire, for the common people to sit and watch in the church-porch on St. Mark's-eve, from eleven o'clock at night till one in the morning. The third year (for it must be done thrice) they are supposed to see the ghosts of all those who are to die next year pass by into the church. When any one sickens that is thought to have been seen in this manner, it is presently whispered about that he will not recover, for that such or such an one, who has watched on St. Mark's-eve, says so."

At Kirby Hill there were some local traditions, which might be added to Brande's account. The most important were, that the Watcher was bound to strict secrecy—his own life being endangered by any indiscreet revelation ; and also, that if he chanced to fall asleep during his vigil, his death before the close of the year might be looked

upon as certain. These consequences were necessary ; for the first secured the reputation of the Watcher, who was tongue-tied only before the hand of death smote any of the inhabitants ; and the second took away the privilege of immortality which would otherwise have been enjoyed by the self-appointed witness to the coming events of mortality.

The men who address themselves to pursuits of a ghostly or mortal nature, are ordinarily distinguished from the common herd by some personal attribute, which we appear instinctively to recognise. Sullenness of character and repulsiveness of demeanour usually mark the finisher of the law ; the sexton has a grim, grave-like aspect, that tells of a communion with earth-worms and skulls, mildewed shrouds and mouldering coffins ; the very parish clerk, with whom are many mortuary associations prevailing over happier rites, wears the air of one who joys him in the doleful melody of the passing-bell ; and the ghost-seer has, or ought to have, the visionary expression and dreamy eye of one whose commerce is solely with the world of spirits. But there are exceptions to all things, and when Shakspeare painted a merry grave-digger, and Walter Scott described a jocular hangman, they only gave evidence of the knowledge of human nature that was in them, and proclaimed the well-known truth of *fronti nulla fides*.

The Watcher of Kirby Hill seemed born to give the negative to all such impressions as are connected with the character of a man's occupations.

He was a stout, thick-set, jovial-looking, round-headed fellow as one could hope to meet with on a summer's day. The full-blown peony was scarcely of so deep a hue as the ruddy cheeks of which he was the owner ; the grin on his face was ready at a moment's notice ; and his voice was the loudest and merriest in the village. It is true that he had a habit of staring with a pair of blue eyes, planted, as the French term it, *à fleur de tête*, but this, when his mysterious pursuit is remembered, can easily be accounted for. The man who is in the habit of looking a legion of ghosts out of countenance may be readily pardoned, if his eyes have more of the lobster than the gazelle in their expression. He was by trade a carpenter, superadding not only the construction of tenements both for the living and the dead, but the avocations also of parish sexton. There was nothing ghostly in his appearance, nor did his appellation savour of the gloom of romance. His name was Tom Punder.

His character corresponded with his personal appearance. He was good-natured to a fault, and honest as the skin between his brows ; somewhat prone to gossip, and by no means disinclined to that species of good-fellowship which, when

friends are assembled, increases as the night grows shorter. This tendency was not unfrequently developed at the weekly club, invariably held every Saturday evening at the "Shoulder of Mutton," in the corner of the Green, of which Tom Punder was the perpetual president, and undoubted oracle; dignities which he enjoyed, the first, in right of his social qualifications, and the second, less from the deep lessons of truth which he expounded than from the profoundly wise air with which he delivered his thoughts when called upon for an opinion. His age, at the period I speak of, was about fifty; he was well-to-do in the world, was married—his wife, by the bye, was a bit of a shrew—and he had a very pretty daughter on the verge of womanhood, who already began to create a sensation, which was not confined to her native village.

With these attributes of happiness and comfort within and around him, it may be asked what motive Tom Punder could possibly have had for taking upon himself the lonely and melancholy office of supervising the world of spirits. It might, perhaps, have arisen from a professional desire to ascertain for how many guests he was called upon in the course of the year to prepare their last abode; or, giving him credit for more metaphysical views, from that inscrutable yearning after the unknown which exists in all minds with more or less of intensity. He might, perhaps,

have calculated that the act would add to his personal importance, and, if he did so, he was right, for even a shake of the head from Tom Punder, when "mortal consequences" were discussed, was worth volumes of observations from other men. The vicar himself, with the burial service to back him, was not invested with a tithe of the mysterious influence which attached to the jovial and sententious sexton. "T'parson," the men of Kirby used to say, "t'parson can see no'but what his bukes tell him,—now Tom Punder can see right thro' bukes, parson, and all." The wholesome awe in which his reverence should have been held was also somewhat diminished from rather a singular cause. He had the misfortune to be club-footed, and those who are fond of associating "judgments" with physical infirmities, declared he had been "struck so" in consequence of having, in his youth, gone out fishing on a Sunday! He was, in fact, a quiet, inoffensive man, whose principal object always seemed to me to get through his clerical duties as quickly as possible, and then hobble back to his books, or take a solitary ride on the moors on his old, white, wall-eyed horse. But whether the vicar of Kirby was deemed of harshly or wisely by his parishioners, it is quite certain that they held it no error of judgment to look upon Tom Punder as the best quotable authority extant.

At what period of his life Tom Punder first

H.

H

qualified himself as a watcher of the dead I never exactly knew. The old people in the village remembered his predecessor, and that was all; they had no interest now in recalling the power of a defunct potentate; their fate was in the keeping of Punder, and on Punder, therefore, they reverently gazed. Even old Becky Coates, who had reached her hundredth year, used to mumble out an unintelligible salutation to the prophetic sexton whenever he passed the stone-bink in front of the almshouse where she daily placed herself—as if she, too, thought that the sickle of death might be turned aside from gathering in the ripe harvest, by a show of courtesy to the bosom friend of the reaper.

The night of St. Mark's-eve in the year 18—, was a singularly inclement one for that season of the year; for although winter lingers long on the dreary Yorkshire moors, it does not often happen that snow is to be seen on the ground after the beginning of April, and it was an accidental change of the weather that produced this effect on the present occasion. Throughout the whole day the snow had fallen heavily, and by nightfall it lay as thick as if it had been Christmas.

Tom Punder was not in the habit of preparing for his lonely vigil by fasting and maceration. On the contrary, it was his constant practice to repair betimes to the "Shoulder of Mutton," and then and there so to fortify the inward man as to render it spirit-proof. Though few of the Kirby "lads"

would have joined in his watch, there were plenty who had no objection to assist him in arming for the ghostly encounter, and on the evening in question the cold weather had driven a goodly knot to the ale-house fireside. Amongst the number was a young man named Joe Talentyre, the son of a small farmer who lived in the neighbouring village of Gayles; he was a lively, good-looking, active young fellow, the master of many rural accomplishments, and, what raised him highly in the popular estimation, the fastest runner in the whole country-side. The favours of the fair are always the prize which youth esteems the highest, and those favours are with equal certainty bestowed by the fair upon such as achieve the mastery over their companions. From these premises it follows that Phœbe Punder, whose beauty we have already hinted at, had met with an Orlando in Joe Talentyre, and she had become his Rosalind. But Tom Punder, though a very good-hearted fellow in the main, was occasionally wrong-headed, and, if the truth must be told, a little under the influence of the grey mare at home. That lady, in spite of her husband's vocation, and *maugre* his being, to a certain extent, one of the pillars of the Church of England (inasmuch as his occupation led him to its foundations), had a strong tendency towards Methodism, and looked upon all rural pastimes as vanity—not to say wickedness. Now Joe

Talentyre was a head-and-front offender in the mother's eyes in that which had won for him the daughter's heart, and she had not only forbidden him the house, but set the worthy sexton's face against him also—as far as related to the encouragement of his suit, though without succeeding in causing any personal estrangement. The common room of the "Shoulder of Mutton" was therefore neutral ground, where Tom Punder and the youth, who sought to ally himself to his house, might meet and converse as freely as if the course of true love were the smoothest track in the world, instead of being as rugged and stony as a Welsh cross-road.

The ale-cup circulated freely amongst the younger men, and certain of the elders did not withhold their hands from compounding, nor their lips from tasting fluids of a stronger nature ; —we need scarcely say that Tom Punder, by virtue of his calling, if he had been at a loss for a better reason, belonged to the last-named category, and he was ably supported by old Charley Wright, the village postman, who was the last to join the party, his widely-extended daily walk having been unusually protracted, owing to the state of the weather. Charley Wright was a character in his way. His favourite vice was "potting," if that could be called a vice, which drew from him such sound precepts of morality while under its influence. There was one maxim which he was constantly in the habit of repeating,

and it derived additional force from his practical illustration of its truth. It was couched in verse, and ran thus :—

Enough's as good as a feast,
If we did but our pleasure know ;
But a drunkard's worse than a beast,
For he drinks till he cannot go.

It was usually in the last stage of intoxication that Charley Wright arrived at this conclusion. He was rather a quaint sort of person to look at, being very short, very spare, and his legs very much bowed ; he had a particularly long, hooked nose, and was deeply pitted with the small-pox. Had he been less remarkable in appearance, the peripatetic dignity with which he was invested would have made him notable ; for in a country place the postman always enjoys a certain consideration. From the mere fact of his being the unconscious distributor of so much joy and sorrow, his character is at once invested with a mysterious claim to respect, as if the contents of the letters which he carries had transfigured him. It was something of this feeling—though there were other causes, too—which qualified him for companionship with the Watcher of the Dead.

“ Well, lad,” said the sexton, without removing his pipe from his mouth, as he smoked in the chimney, “ where’s t ha’ been so late t’night. I thowt thou’dst been lost i’t snaw.”

“ More unlikely things have happened,” re-

turned Charley Wright, whose dialect was less Yorkshire than that of his interlocutor, probably owing to his familiarity with letters; "t'drift was very deep, 'specially down by Ask-beck."

"What—at neukin o't lonnin?"

"Ay; where t'owd man was lost two year ago; him as you seed."

"Ah!" said Tom Punder, with the solemn air which always came over him when he spoke of his preternatural occupation, "I mind having seed *him*, and *yan more as war t'follow*."

A cold shudder ran through the company at this indefinite omen; every man thought of himself, but every one made a point of looking at the postman, as if to fix him with the chance. He seemed little affected by the sexton's words; perhaps he understood better than they who was meant. At any rate it did not disturb the equanimity with which he took a prodigiously long pull at the mug of ale before him.

"But it warn't only the drift at Ask-beck that kept me out so late," rejoined the postman; "I had to go round by Squire Cradock's."

"Ony news from t'outlandish parts?" inquired Tom Punder, throwing into his eye a strong fishy expression.

"A letter with a black seal," replied Charley; "I needn't to tell *you* the rest."

"I know'd it," said Tom Punder; "t'young squire's dead."

"Yes," said the postman, "killed a fightin' agin the French at t'battle of Calimanco."

"Where's Calimanco?" asked Joe Talentyre.

"In Amerriky," replied Tom Punder, oracularly.

No one presumed to question this novel geographical discovery; for the company inwardly argued that, as the sexton knew what was going on in the other world, he could not surely be at a loss to decide upon every thing that takes place in this.

There was one exception to this general belief. Joe Talentyre doubted not only Tom Punder's geography, but even his powers of divination; he took care, however, not to say so openly, though he had formed a plan for putting them to the test.

The conversation, as a matter of course, now took the tone imparted to it by the postman's announcement; and many dreary stories were told of warnings, dreams, and apparitions. Tom Punder, contenting himself with looking as if he knew "all about it," smoked his pipe in silence, interrupting that occupation only to pay his addresses to something very hot which stood on the hob beside him, and which any one by at the brewing would have pronounced a very skillfully compounded jorum of nogg. Charley Wright, who seemed fatigued with his day's exertions, gradually lost his loquacity, and ceasing

.

to give utterance to the great moral truths which the spirit of John Barleycorn invariably evoked, fell fast asleep in his chair. The company being thus occupied, the silent departure of Joe Talentyre was not noticed; and so intent on their subject were the alternate narrators and listeners, that the clock had struck ten before they were aware, or seemed to be aware, of the lateness of the hour; we say *seemed*, for in proportion as the night waned, the disposition to sit up became more manifest, none liking to be the first to move. This craven thought entered not into the mind of Tom Punder; nicotia and nogg had done their work bravely, and steeled him to his annual task. Casting his eyes on the clock, he said—

“Well, lads, I mun go. T’owd kirk-yard will be waitin’! Yan on ye, help me on wi’ t’ top-coat.”

He rose as he spoke, and was speedily equipped. The party in the “Shoulder of Mutton” accompanied him to the door, and hurriedly bade him good night, amazed at the coolness with which he went to confront his fate.

A curious or less superstitious observer might, however, have detected the cause of his courage in a certain obliquity left by his track across the snow, as if the flesh had been weaker than the spirit. It was clear, at all events, that metaphysical aid had been called in to sustain him. So thought the rest of the toppers, who, now that

Tom Punder had left them, began to think the "Shoulder of Mutton" scarcely a safe place to abide in, and that their wisest policy was to reach their own homes as speedily as possible, where, with doors bolted and windows barred, and a bit of mountain ash thrust into the key-hole, they were safe from the spirits who wandered abroad that night. Having roused up the little postman, and placed him in the middle of the chain formed by their linked arms, they sallied forth in a body, and dropping off one by one at their respective doors, in a few minutes the village of Kirby Hill was as silent as the churchyard, which formed one of its boundaries.

The house where Tom Punder dwelt was, in a manner, let into a corner of the churchyard, but there was only one window which commanded a view of it. This was in the side of the building, on the ground-floor, and was distant only a few feet from the pathway which led from the gate direct to the church-porch; so that a finer position for observing the passers-by could not possibly be had. It was, of course, at this window that the Watcher of the Dead took his solitary stand, to number and note down the doomed ones.

As no person had ever yet been known of sufficient hardihood to keep a check upon the operations of the spiritual world besides the Watcher himself, it followed that, in rendering an account of his vigil,

Tom Punder had it all his own way, and might, in a certain sense, be said to have prophesied on velvet, his predictions being always *après le coup*.

His subsequent revelations in reference to this occasion were of a more remarkable nature than common. To give them verbatim, in the broad Doric in which he used to indulge, would rather confuse than enlighten the reader ; we will, therefore, take the liberty of translating his language into somewhat plainer English.

“As soon as I got home,” ran the narrative, “as all the people had gone to bed, I fetched myself a can of strong ale from the cellar, some that the parson gives me in part-wages every October, and put that and a horn to drink it out of on a table close at hand. I then made a sort of bolster of my carpenter’s flannel-jacket and apron to prop me up as I sat in the window-seat, and putting on my thick red nightcap, I just took one horn of ale and began to watch. Well, for the matter of half-an-hour, or it might be more, nothing stirred. Thinks I, Isn’t old Becky Coates a coming to-night? How much longer does she mean to sit on the almshouse bink? says I, to myself ; I should have fancied that her time was almost up. Old Jemmy Gray, too, is pretty nigh as old as she is, and he’s had the megrims all the winter. On a sudden I felt a sort of cold shiver come over me, just as if some one had opened a street-door right

at my back ; but I knew too well what I was about to turn my head. I wasn't a going to have the devil fetch me, out of my own fondness. Says I, It's a coming now ; and sure enough it did come. The snow, which lay half a foot deep in the churchyard, had left off falling ; the night was clear, and the moon being at the full, I could see right into the church-porch. Presently I heard something rustling at the churchyard-gate like the dry leaves swept into a corner by the wind in autumn. The wicket then flew open, and two figures, dressed in white, glided swiftly by. It's ordained that these creturs must turn their faces towards him that watches, that he may know who's who, and prepare their graves accordingly. A ghastly sight it is, for the most part. The face looks hollow like a bird's, the mouth is always wide open and shaped like an O, and the eyes are dull and no more colour in them than water has. Well, this time, instead of looking towards me, the heads was turned quite t'other way, and I could make nothing out of 'em but that one seemed a good deal taller than the other. Says I to myself, this is something out of the common ; I wonder what it means ! Two at a time never came here before ; it's the first time, too, that I recollect a spirit being ashamed to look me in the face. So I took a good long draught of ale and kept my eye on the church-porch, through which they had vanished ; for the church-door is always set

wide open on St. Mark's-eve, as no one knows where the ghosts may want to go to. In about ten minutes, as nigh as I can guess, while I was a-staring with all my might, back again comes the two apparitions. Ah, says I, I shall have 'em this time; they forgot their duty just now. I shouldn't wonder if they was some of the gentlefolks up the Hall—there hasn't been a burying in the family for some time. They moved slowly on, just like the squire's two silver peacocks in the great gravel-walk; their heads was bound up with grave-clothes, and long white shrouds fluttered round them. As they got nearer, the light fell on their two faces, and I never felt such a turn as came over me then, for I saw, as plainly as ever I saw anything in my life, that those faces belonged to Joe Talentyre and my daughter Phœbe. They came on smiling-like, looking first of all at each other and then at me very pleasantly. Of course I says nothing, for I was fit to drop, but I watches them with all my eyes, expecting every moment to see them vanish through the wicket. Instead of that, when they came right opposite to where I sat looking through the grating, they stopped of their own accord; and poor Joe's ghost, looking straight at me, opened his mouth and spoke—

“ ‘ We're a goin', Tom,' says the ghost.' ”

“ ‘ Where to?' says I, breaking silence for the first time since I had been a Watcher.

“ ‘You’ll know that soon enough,’ replies Joe’s spirit. ‘Your dame wouldn’t let us come together in this world, so we’re bound off for the other.’

“ ‘Can’t nothing prevent it?’ says I, gasping-like, for Joe’s spirit looked awful pale and fierce.

“ ‘Yes,’ says he, ‘you can. You have the power to save poor Phœbe’s life, and mine, and the dame’s too—she’s a comin’ by-and-by.’

“ ‘Only tell me what it is, then, and dammee if I don’t do it.’

“ ‘It’s no’ but this, mun,’ says the ghost, in a more affable tone, ‘consent to let Phœbe marry me, and leave off watching for the future.’

“ ‘Do,’ cried the small ghost, as represented my daughter.

“ ‘Amen,’ says I, solemnly ; ‘she shall have him.’

“The words were no sooner out of my mouth than the ghosts was clean gone away from the place where they stood. The little spirit seemed to be hoisted up into the air by the other, who shot off like a flash of lightning behind the church-yard-wall ; at the same moment I heard a loud bang and a kind of wild, unearthly laughter. I recollect nothing more that happened that night, and I suppose I must have gone to sleep about daybreak. There was no ale left in the can when I woke, and I went up-stairs to bed.

“ ‘Tom Punder,’ says my wife, ‘hast seen

owght by the common i't'night, thou look'st dreadful scared.'

" 'Tibby,' says I, 'I've seen and heerd more nor ever I did afore in all my life. Do you want to see our Phœbe carried to the grave?'

" 'Tom,' says she, with a shriek, a jumpin' up in the bed, 'I'd rather you—that is, I—went there mysen.'

" 'Then she mun marry Joe Talentyre, and that's the long and the short on't.'

" 'Umph,' growled Tibby, a snatching the bed-clothes round her, and flopping down on the pillow. 'That half-wit!'

" She lay silent for a minute or two, and then spoke again—

" 'What mad' thee open t'street-door last night, and bang 't again so loud, Tom?'

" 'I did nowt o't kind,' I replied.

" 'As sure as I'm here I heerd it go, and voices a talking, and some one a laughing.'

" 'You did?' says I; 'then there can't be no doubt about it. Don't you ask no more questions, Tibby, or p'r'aps you'll hear summat more than you like.'

" Poor Tib began to shiver at these words, and lay quite still.

" She never afterwards said a syllable agin Joe Talentyre. I kept my promise to the spirit; Phœbe and he was married the next month, and went to live at Gayles. I blocked up the window

that looked into the churchyard, and never saw no more ghosts. I somehow think that they be banished quite out of the Riding; and as for Joe Talentyre, he can never hear tell on 'em without laughing till he's fit to bust."

This is Tom Punder's version of what took place on the last eve of St. Mark, when he was a Watcher.

The Haunted House near Hampstead.

Demon, Ghost, or Ghoul—what is it ?

I.

ON the summit of one of those undulations which gently swell on every side from Hampstead Heath, there stands a large house, somewhat fantastically constructed.

Seen at a distance, this house forms a kind of landmark, its battlements and flying buttresses making it a conspicuous object in the view.

But it is only from a distance that the house can be well seen; for, on a nearer approach, the high road sinks beneath a bank bordered by dark fir-trees, which nearly surround the domain, and give the place, on its only accessible side, a very gloomy appearance.

About twenty years ago this cheerless aspect was greatly increased by neglect. At the entrance was a lodge which had been half built and then abandoned; two tall pillars were there, with no gate between them, and a broad, open track, rather than a road, led up to the house itself, which was

green with the damp that streaked its stuccoed walls.

These indications of a newly-erected dwelling were confirmed by everything around. The grounds were all in disorder, the shrubberies thinly planted, the garden walks rough and ragged; near the portico lay fragments of a frieze that had never been put up; the skeleton of a gigantic conservatory displayed its huge, bare ribs; a large stone basin, intended for a fountain, remained waterless; nothing seemed finished; and the general impression was that of a grand undertaking suddenly arrested midway.

The cause of this desolation was the bankruptcy of the person for whom the house was originally built. He was a City broker, named Ardmore, who, speculating wildly, had failed in a great commercial panic. Mr. Ardmore's principal creditor, who became the trade assignee, held a heavy mortgage on the Hampstead property, and when the bankrupt's affairs were wound up, Ardmore House, as the place was called, passed easily into his hands.

The new proprietor, also a broker, and commonly known amongst City men as old Dick Crowther, was enormously rich, and, if he had been so minded, might speedily have completed his predecessor's unfinished designs; but either he had no taste for improving or did not like the expense of it, for although he immediately took

up his abode at Ardmore House, he refused to lay out a single shilling on embellishments. The lodge entrance was stopped by an ordinary swing-gate which served for all purposes, the fences were repaired where broken, the land was converted into pasture, but the shrubberies were allowed to dwindle, the garden plots held no flowers, the sculptured frieze sank deeper in the ground, no glass covered in the conservatory, the fountain continued dry, mildew still stained the walls,—and except that the grounds were shut in and partly turned to a useful end, the change in their appearance was not very striking.

The interior of Ardmore House was rather more satisfactory than its outside promised. A good deal of money had been spent in making it habitable by the man who never had the fortune, good or bad, to live there. It is true he did not furnish it, but as far as he had proceeded, it was fitted up very completely. Mr. Ardmore, like most people who make money with rapidity—keep it how they may—was fond of decoration, and the fashion of the day being in favour of Gothic art, the Gothic style prevailed; all the rooms down stairs were panelled with oak, light was filtered through narrow casements, the passages were long and dark, the staircases wide, and heavy with cumbersome and grotesque carving. What Mr. Ardmore might have done with the upper rooms could only be guessed at, for the ruin which overtook

him had left them bare. This mattered little, however, to old Dick Crowther, who found space enough below for his own occupation and that of his family.

That family consisted only of himself and five servants: an elderly housekeeper, two young women, who divided the household work between them, a gardener, and a groom, who, when not in his stable, was employed in all sorts of ways indoors. A larger family than this might have tenanted Ardmore House, had its owner so willed it, for old Dick Crowther was neither childless nor without relations. But he lived apart from his own kindred, having quarrelled with and discarded his only son, a young man of seven or eight-and-twenty, who, in opposition to his commands, had married a beautiful but penniless girl; as for his relations, they were all in straitened circumstances—a reason quite sufficient with him not to notice them; and for acquaintance, he had none, receiving visits from nobody except the man of law in whom he put his trust.

Though not absolutely a miser, old Dick Crowther was what is called “close.” He had realized by his own exertions every farthing of his large fortune, and occupied in making money all his life, felt no inclination to spend it. Neither was he fitted by temperament to dissipate any part of his means by seeing company or mixing with society. He was of a morose and malicious na-

ture, had always a sour or spiteful word for everybody, and those who had business to transact with him were never so well pleased as when their business was over. But it was not necessary for him to speak to declare his character: the face of old Dick Crowther left none in doubt, if any faith were to be placed in physiognomy, what manner of man they had before them.

His figure was spare and under the middle height, and a habit of stooping made him look much shorter than he really was; his arms were so disproportionately long that his wiry fingers reached below his knees, while his lower limbs were bowed and short; yet with these apparent disadvantages he possessed great strength and activity, and even advancing years did not seem greatly to diminish these qualities. But you almost forgot his ungainly form when you looked upon his face—it was of such exceeding ugliness. His small gleaming eyes were deeply sunk in his head, and buried beneath a brow “villanously low,” that receded at a rapid angle; his nose was nearly flat, his upper lip very long, his mouth wide but compressed, deep wrinkles furrowed his sallow cheeks, and his chin was lost in a fringe of white whisker which encircled his jaws from ear to ear; what had been the colour of his hair was a mystery of the past, for within the recollection of man he had always worn a short, stiff-set wig, which the many whom he had played false in the course of

his dealings said—when he was out of hearing—was the only real thing about him.

For three years after taking possession of Ardmore House, old Dick Crowther kept the even tenor of his way, making life uncomfortable to his few dependents, who dreaded alike to see or hear him, yet who lingered on in his service, in the hope—common enough with the class—that he would leave them something when it should “please the Lord,” as they said, to remove him from this world!

That event appeared, to them especially, a long while in coming; but the much-desired tokens came at last. At the end of the third year, when the word “unbearable,” as applied to their master’s conduct, was freely circulated through the house, and “warning” was on every servant’s lip, old Dick Crowther was taken ill.

One cold December afternoon, just as it was getting dusk, the front-door bell of Ardmore House was rung several times in quick succession, and with unusual violence, and Thomas, the groom, hurrying up, found that his master’s eagerness to get in was the cause of the hasty summons. There was just light enough for him to see that old Dick Crowther, generally so calm and collected, was in a state of extreme agitation, and looked, to use Thomas’s phrase, “quite scared.” In answer to the question if anything was the matter, Mr. Crowther said he had been standing

about too long in the grounds, and thought he had caught a chill; he should be better, no doubt, after a glass of hot brandy-and-water, which he desired might be sent up to him at once. He delivered this order with so little of his customary harshness—it sounded even gently in Thomas's ears—that the groom was filled with surprise, and it became that evening the subject of much comment in the kitchen, Mrs. Jones, the housekeeper, expressing it as her opinion that she should not be astonished "if something happened."

She was a true prophet, for when she called Mr. Crowther next morning, he told her he had had a very bad night, and thought, if he did not get better soon, he must have a doctor; he would wait a little, however; the uncomfortable sensations—he could not well describe them—might pass away if he stayed quietly in bed.

For old Dick Crowther to keep his bed was indeed a wonder, and would have made a jubilee in Ardmore House that day if something mysterious had not been attached to the circumstance. There was more talk in the kitchen, but it was in a lower tone than ordinary, as if a sense of dread pervaded the household; and when one or other went up to listen at "master's door," the report brought back was invariably to the effect that he was talking to himself, which Thomas said was a sign he was "going into Illyrium."

A remoter country seemed, however, to be his more probable destination ; for, as the day wore away, Mr. Crowther became evidently worse.

“Such strange tremblings and startings all of a sudden,” said Mrs. Jones, “I never yet was a witness to. And that last paracism when he gave a screech that you might have heard on the top of Hampstead Heath, was most awful ! I told him then I thought he ought for to see the doctor without no more delay, which he agreed to it with a shiver, and so, Thomas, you must ride off to St. John’s Wood and fetch the nighest.”

II.

Mrs. Jones’s advice had not been taken too soon, for when the medical man arrived, whose “signal of distress”—his coloured lamp—had caught Thomas’s eye as he galloped up the Finchley-road, he did what most doctors generally do in the first instance—looked grave, and shook his head.

“Pulse,” said Mr. Gorrick, pausing and ejaculating—“pulse soft and weak—circulation languid—rigour—animal heat deficient—voice feeble—any cough?—hum—ha!—debility—yes, a good deal of debility—musn’t fast too long—shouldn’t be exposed to cold—dangerous at a certain time of life—stimulants necessary—send something to do good—meantime, Mrs. Jones—kind enough—nice beef-tea—soon as possible—half an hour after,

glass of old port wine—medicine at bedtime, that is to say, usual hour—needn't be uneasy—only want restoratives—do very well—see him in the morning.”

Having comforted his patient, Mr. Gorrick left the room, followed closely by Mrs. Jones, who, wanting something a little stronger in the way of opinion to descant upon down stairs, asked him, when she was fairly outside, what he really thought of her master's condition.

“You have lived here some time?” inquired Mr. Gorrick, in reply.

“Not here, but with Mr. Crowther going on for five-and-twenty years.”

“Then I don't mind telling you, Mrs. Jones, that I suspect”—he leaned forward, and whispered—“I suspect the heart is affected: what we term ‘dilatation with attenuation.’ How old is Mr. Crowther?”

“Eighty-one, sir, next birthday.”

“Hum—ha! See he takes what I send. Good night, Mrs. Jones. Call early to-morrow.”

“No!” said Mrs. Jones to herself, as she closed the door on Mr. Gorrick, “he's wrong there. Nothing ever affected *his* heart. Look at Master James and his young family: poor starving things!”

Whether it were the beef-tea, the port wine, the medicine, a combination of all three, or the gradual fading away of the exciting cause of

illness, is uncertain, but Mr. Crowther seemed better on the following day. The symptoms, Mr. Gorrick said, were alleviated, and his patient, encouraged by his words, turned his thoughts, from the fear which had possessed them, into their old channel. There was a sum of money lying at his banker's—doing nothing, as he grumbled—about investing which he was anxious. He must consult Mr. Vowles, his attorney, respecting the security which had been offered for a loan at a high per-centage, and though not well enough to get up—that, after all, did not signify, he could transact business where he lay as well as in his chair—a message was despatched, desiring Mr. Vowles's immediate attendance. In the course of the afternoon, the lawyer made his appearance, and was shown at once into his patron's bed-chamber, a locality which there is a reason for describing.

It was a spacious and lofty apartment, dimly lit, in the dark December weather, by a single pointed window in a deep embrasure, with solid mullions and diapered panes. The walls were wainscoted; an immense oaken press occupied one end of the room; on the third side yawned a wide chimney-piece, built for burning wood on the hearth, on which some large logs were blazing brightly; and on the fourth side stood a bed of Elizabethan dimensions, carved and ornamented in Elizabethan fashion, with the addition

of much damask drapery that swept in heavy folds to the floor ; a massive table covered with a thick cloth, and numerous high-backed chairs, completed the furniture of the apartment, where all was, to a great extent, in uniform sombre keeping.

We need not occupy ourselves with the details of the conversation between Mr. Crowther and his attorney, so far as it referred to the investment of the old man's superfluous cash ; but that which followed, having a direct relation to the events which afterwards occurred, requires to be told.

"And now, sir," said Mr. Vowles, "this matter being settled, I think, to your satisfaction, perhaps it may not be amiss, since I *am* here, if we go a little into the other business that you were speaking of the last time I had the pleasure of attending."

Old Dick Crowther, who sat propped up with pillows, his long arms resting on the counterpane, like sentinels over the papers which he had just examined, cast a sharp glance at the attorney, but did not make an immediate reply. Mr. Vowles, therefore, returned to the charge.

"If you remember, sir——" he began.

"I know, I know," testily exclaimed Mr. Crowther ; "you mean the will. I'm not likely to forget that."

"Oh no, sir, of course not. Only I thought I would just name it."

"You thought! Did you think of anything else? My illness, for example?"

"Well, sir," hesitated the attorney—"you know, sir, you have been—a little—what shall I say?—indisposed—and—and——"

"I might be carried off in a hurry before you got what you wanted. Was that it?"

"Mr. Crowther! I assure you——"

The old man laughed satirically.

"Don't tell me any lies. I know you. If I didn't, you'd never have done for me. So you think I had better make my will! But, I tell you what, Vowles, I'm not so bad as you fancy. I feel quite well again."

"I'm delighted, sir, to hear you say so. All I meant was, that it might be prudent to guard against accidents. They will happen, you know, sir, to the very strongest, and with your large property, consider, sir—if you left no will, all of it would go to the very person who, if I understand you rightly, you don't wish to succeed to it."

"Don't wish!" almost screamed the old man. "Curse him! He *shan't* have it! He *shan't* have it, I tell you! Do you hear? He *shan't* have it!"

"In that case, sir——"

"In that case? Ah! that confounded shiver and spasm! Well, you're right. We had better go to work. Give me yonder box from the table beside you."

Mr. Crowther unlocked it with a key which hung from a chain round his neck. He took out some papers, looked at what was written on the back of one of them, unfolded it, and read it through. When he had done, he handed it to the attorney, and told him to do the same.

Mr. Vowles eagerly obeyed, but after devouring two or three lines, he suddenly stopped short, and his face became white as ashes.

Old Dick Crowther, who watched him intently, gave way to an exulting burst of laughter.

"What!" he cried, "you thought you had lost your chance! Ha! ha! ha! Look at the date, man—look at the date."

Mr. Vowles hastily turned the leaf.

"I see, sir," he said, with an effort to recover himself. "It is a will—drawn up—and witnessed—ten years ago—in favour of your only son—James—Crowther—but—there is no codicil—it is not revoked!"

"We will revoke it in a moment, Vowles. You see that fire! I needn't tell you what to do!"

The attorney skipped across the room and thrust the paper between the blazing logs, bending over them till it was entirely consumed.

"We have cleared the ground now," resumed old Dick Crowther. "If your nerves are steady enough, take pen and paper and write to my dictation: if not, never mind, another time will suit me."

"Oh no, sir, no,—now, now," urged the attor-

ney, breathless again, but from a different cause.

"I'm quite ready, sir—quite!"

"We'll make it short, Vowles."

"The shorter, sir, the better."

Old Dick Crowther then, in a steady voice, set forth his intentions in that last will and testament which the eager attorney rapidly penned. Divested of all technicalities, the document declared that the testator bequeathed to his only son James "the sum of one shilling, as a reward for filial obedience;" and to "Martin Vowles, Gent., one, &c.," the whole of his real and the residue of his personal estate, after the aforesaid legacy and all the testator's just debts were paid.

Mr. Vowles, when he laid down his pen, thought it necessary to make a speech.

"Your bounty, your goodness, Mr. Crowther, will ever be engraved on a grateful heart. I want words, sir, to express——"

"Don't trouble yourself to look for 'em, Vowles," interrupted old Dick Crowther. "Shall I tell you why I have made you my heir?"

"I have no merit to plead, sir, except the desire to serve you faithfully."

"No merit! Yes, you have, Vowles. You have one merit that exceeds any your modesty keeps in the background. I leave you my money, because"—how the old man enjoyed the attorney's suspense—"because—you are the greatest scoundrel I ever knew in all my life!"

And with another burst of laughter the old man fell back, exhausted, on his pillow.

Unpalatable as was the compliment, Mr. Vowles swallowed it, there being no one by to see the dirt he ate.

"Whom shall we have, sir, to witness it?" he asked, as soon as old Dick Crowther had left off laughing.

"Anybody; call Jones, and Thomas. They'll do, I suppose!"

"Perfectly, sir—perfectly!"

The housekeeper and groom were summoned, and the paper being doubled back to hide the contents, old Dick Crowther affixed his name to it; the act was witnessed by Jane Jones and Thomas Hedges, and they were dismissed.

"Give me the paper," said Mr. Crowther.

Mr. Vowles handed it to him. He ran his eye over it, muttering to himself the while—

"One shilling—yes—a shilling's worth of sugar-plums for his brats. Or a bonnet-string for his wife. She's a fine lady they say. A shilling to buy her a ribbon!"

Something more followed. Perhaps another compliment to Mr. Vowles, but it was inaudible.

Perceiving that he had read it through, the attorney held out his hand to receive back the will; but if he had formed the hope of keeping it in his custody, he was disappointed.

"No," said Mr. Crowther, "it will be safer

here than anywhere else. Besides, I may want to look at it again."

And he put the will under his pillow, and lay down on it, like a "gryphon," over "the guarded gold."

"Vowles," said he, "you may go! I don't want you any more now. Mind you bring me those securities to-morrow! Good night!"

By this time the evening was far advanced, and though the attorney took leave of his patron, he did not leave the house. It was usual with Mr. Vowles now and then to take a bed there, and on this occasion the thought struck him that it would be better if he remained where he was. Mrs. Jones sent him up some supper; he made himself comfortable; and by ten o'clock all the inmates of Ardmore House were hushed in repose.

III.

What was that shriek in the dead of the night that woke every one from sleep in Ardmore House, crying, "Woe! woe!" in accents the shrillest that ever startled human ear?

The attorney leaped up and sat trembling, for the sound came upon him in the midst of a dream, wherein the preparation of the iniquitous will which he had counselled was being re-enacted—with this addition, that the heir whom he had despoiled was there, striving to wrest the paper from his grasp, while old Dick Crowther's mock-

ing laugh rang in his ears. He listened, fearing to hear the cry again, but it was not repeated, and trusting that indigestion only had caused his alarm, he tried to compose himself once more to sleep. Conscience, however, was too wakeful: in one short minute, as he lay there—a minute that seemed interminable—all the worst and meanest acts of his life came crowding into his thoughts, combat as he would against them. To drive them away he sat up again, and then he fancied he heard a noise, as if somebody were in the passage. He listened more intently, and felt sure he heard a footstep, but he was too much frightened to ask who was there, dreading something, he knew not what. He held his breath, but for a time everything was still. At length—the interval appeared long to him, though it was brief in reality—another cry arose, echoing through the house, a cry unlike the first, but almost as piercing. It was a woman's voice screaming for help, yet the coward did not stir: bathed in a cold perspiration, he shrank down in bed, covering his head with the clothes.

“Help! help! my master! my master!”

Immediately afterwards there was a sharp knocking at the attorney's bedroom door.

“Oh, Mr. Vowles—pray, sir, get up and come this way. I am afraid Mr. Crowther is dead!”

“Dead!” gasped Mr. Vowles. “I—I—I haven't a light.” Then, some impulse getting

the better of his fear, he cried, "Stay, stay, don't go away—I—I will join you directly. Is nobody there but you, Mrs. Jones?"

But she was now appealing to others for aid. The two maid-servants, the groom, and the gardener had rushed up-stairs, all but the last more or less scared. Mr. Vowles heard them hurry past his door, and remembering that in a multitude there is safety, he huddled on his clothes as well as he could, and made haste after them.

When Mr. Vowles entered the room where the servants were assembled, he saw at a glance that Mrs. Jones's apprehension was verified.

There lay old Dick Crowther on his back, rigid as stone: in his last agony his head had slipped from the pillow and hung over the side of the bed. Death, however, as it seemed, had not taken him without some warning. He had apparently wrestled with the dark shadow—perhaps endeavoured to ring for assistance—for the bed-clothes were disordered, and one of the curtains was partly torn down, the old man's left hand still clutching the folds that were gathered round his head.

Had he been taken with an ague fit in the first instance, and left his bed to warm himself? It appeared likely, for the embers were scattered over the hearth. And, finding the fire extinguished, had crept back again, and the death-pains had seized him.

This was Mrs. Jones's belief. What did Mr. Vowles think?

Only one idea possessed the mind of Mr. Vowles. If old Dick Crowther was dead, he, Mr. Vowles, was his heir. Capricious and deceitful the old man might have been, but the suddenness of his death had prevented the possibility of his altering his will.

Wasting no time, therefore, on useless conjectures, Mr. Vowles rushed to the bed, and, leaning on the corpse, thrust his hand under the pillow.

But that which he sought for he sought in vain. The will was not there!

Who had removed it?

With quick suspicion the attorney turned to Mrs. Jones.

"What have you done with that paper," he cried, "which you, and Thomas there, witnessed last night?"

"Me, sir!" exclaimed the astonished house-keeper. "I done with it, sir? I've never set eyes upon it since—not from that hour to this!"

"You lie, woman! You were in this room by yourself, and you must have taken it!"

Before she could reply he again tossed over the pillow, threw it into the middle of the room, and rummaged the bed in every direction, respecting the dead no more than if a log of wood had lain in his place.

"For shame, Mr. Vowles!" exclaimed the housekeeper. "Is that the way to behave?"

"Mrs. Jones," said the attorney, quivering with ill-suppressed passion, "I advise you not to trifle with me. The will is gone, and you've taken it. I'll have you searched!"

"Come, sir!" said the gardener, a sturdy fellow, "this wont do, sir—Mrs. Jones is respectable, and above such an act as that."

"If it was the last word I had to utter——"

"That you wouldn't, Mrs. Jones, that you wouldn't," exclaimed both the housemaids in chorus, completing the unfinished asseveration; "you'd scorn it, Mrs. Jones."

The housekeeper's accents were so full of honesty, the general belief in her innocence so firm, and the support she received so strong, that the attorney drew in his horns.

"Well," he said, "it's the most marvellous thing in the world! Here was a will made, and in safe keeping only a few hours ago, and now it's spirited away, God knows where! You must excuse my irritation, Mrs. Jones, I am interested in that will. The poor dear old gentleman left me a trifle."

"We'll help you to search for it, sir," said the housekeeper, coldly. "Master's keys are lying on that table. There's the box he kept his papers in. Open it, and let us all stand by while you

look for the missing will. He may have locked it up after you left."

"True! true! Mrs. Jones, I'm obliged to you," said Mr. Vowles. "Stupid in me not to have thought of that."

He offered to shake hands, but the housekeeper drew back, and pointed to the box.

It was opened. Every paper was turned over one by one, but the absentee, which Mr. Vowles could have sworn to at a glance, was not discovered.

"There's only one course left," said he; "as soon as it's light, you, Thomas, ride off to the registrar of deaths: tell him to let the coroner know;—oh yes, he's dead sure enough; cover up his face with the sheet, Mrs. Jones;—and let me have a pair of fresh candles; I shall stay here till the morning."

Cupidity had mastered fear.

IV.

The inquest was held next day. Mr. Gorrick, who attended, gave it as his opinion—in the absence of all external signs, and judging from previous symptoms—that spasm of the heart, brought on by ague, had shortened the days of old Dick Crowther; and a verdict was returned of natural death.

The attorney's vigil had been fruitless. He had ransacked every place he could think of, but

all in vain. Mr. Vowles would not, however, give up his chance; he might have overlooked the very spot; he would wait till the body was removed, to be placed in its coffin in another room, and then he would search again. He resolved, therefore, to make Ardmore House his home until the funeral, which he took upon himself to order, was over; and as for several years he had managed the affairs of the deceased, there was no one to say him nay. Some business he had to transact meanwhile, which, though not to his liking, could not be avoided. If Mr. Crowther had been a man of less mark where merchants most do congregate, Mr. Vowles would have trusted to the chapter of accidents, and not have promulgated the news of his decease; but the papers would report the inquest, concealment was impossible, and therefore he wrote to announce "the melancholy event" to Mr. Crowther's expectant relations—that is to say, to all who lived in London; there was only one who did not live there—the nearest in blood—but him Mr. Vowles accidentally forgot.

It was late in the afternoon of the day following that on which Mr. Crowther died before the mortuary arrangements were made that left the field clear for the search which the attorney proposed to renew. If there had been gloom over Ardmore House while old Dick Crowther lived, it was not diminished by his being in his coffin.

Natural feeling apart—though there was little in this instance to excite it—a sense of awe attaches always to the presence of the dead amongst the living, and every one of the house servants sincerely wished that their late master was buried. But it was a more than common apprehension that made them unwilling to venture near the room in which he had been placed, though the door was locked and the key of it in Mrs. Jones's pocket. Old Dick Crowther's life, they felt tolerably sure, had been a bad one; the manner of his death was strange, the loss of the will a thing to wonder at; he was himself so weird of aspect, and so rich withal, that they found plenty to talk about to augment their fear. Alone, not one of them would have consented to go up-stairs; and they moved about hurriedly in pairs, returning as quickly as they could to their common centre before the kitchen fire.

Scarcely more comfortable thoughts filled the mind of Mr. Vowles as he sat in his private apartment meditating by turns on the past, the present, and the future. It was, however, no time for inaction—*that* he knew—and all the meditation in the world would not advance his object—the discovery of the will. He must set to work in earnest if he wished to find it, and so, conquering his repugnance to enter the room where he had seen the fearful spectacle of his patron's twisted corpse, he took up his light and

proceeded towards his destination. He had to pass the dining-room where, food for worms, old Dick Crowther tested the weight of his own mahogany, and he shuddered as he quickly strode by: the next moment he cautiously turned the handle of the bedroom door, and as cautiously entered. The chamber, it will be remembered, was both large and lofty, and the light Mr. Vowles carried was too feeble to penetrate the obscurity in which it was wrapped. He set the candle down on the table, which he drew close to the bed, where he proposed to make his first examination. It was likely enough that the paper he was in search of might have slipped between the mattresses, and one by one he carefully displaced all the coverings, shaking them out, and casting them in a heap on the floor. When he had taken away the lower sheet, and thrown that aside with the rest, he paused for a few moments to consider how he should proceed. The first mattress was thick and heavy, and it required all his strength to drag it off the bed: he wished also that his operations should be conducted as noiselessly as possible. The table must be put back to its former place to admit of room for the mattress to lie on the ground, and Mr. Vowles turned to remove it.

Gracious Heaven! what object met his view!

There, peering across the table, stood old Dick Crowther, with the same malicious eyes and the

same wicked grin that Mr. Vowles so well collected !

The figure did not speak, but the expression on its terrible face plainly asked—as Mr. Vowles averred to his dying day—if he had found the will ; and a hideous chuckle seemed to express delight at the attorney's failure.

Suddenly the figure stretched out his long arms as if to seize him, but more than this Mr. Vowles was unable to remember ; his terror was so excessive that he sank on the floor in a swoon.

Again and again the cry of "Woe ! woe !" resounded through Ardmore House, making the blood run cold of the group in the kitchen, who huddled together for protection.

"Lord have mercy upon us !" exclaimed Mrs. Jones, falling on her knees ; "the same words as last night."

"*And* forgive us our sins !" chimed in both the housemaids, following her example.

Thomas's teeth chattered ; he tried to speak, but could utter nothing intelligible.

"Something heavy seemed to tumble," said Mrs. Jones, pointing to the ceiling.

"Per-haps," said Thomas, not yet master of his voice—"per-haps—the—the—De-De-Devil—is—a-carrying off—of—M-m-master !"

"Oh Lord ! oh Lord !" screamed the three women, in simultaneous chorus.

"Or that — there — attur-ney !" continued

Thomas, pursuing the encouraging theme. "Who—who'll go and see?"

"Woe! woe!" shrieked the unearthly voice; but the sound came now from a different quarter.

If at that moment you had offered those four persons a thousand pounds apiece, in glittering gold, it would not have tempted them to stir a foot.

"What can have become of William?" ejaculated Susan, the younger of the two housemaids. She alluded to the gardener, the only one who was absent. "He never," she added, "stops out so late as this!"

"Here I am!" said the person in question, entering as he spoke.

Another scream from Susan.

"Oh Lord, William, you've given me quite a turn. Is it you?"

"Who else should it be?" returned her admirer. "Why, what ever is the matter?—you seem all nohow-like!"

"Well we may, William!" said Mrs. Jones, "and so would you be if you'd heard what we've heard!"

"What did you hear?"

"I can't tell you, William."

"Perhaps I might say the same if you was to ask me what I've just seen."

"Oh, what was it?" cried they all, gathering round the gardener.

"That's just where it is," said William; "I don't know. But," he continued, speaking in a grave, even a solemn tone, "I'll tell you what. I'm not a man as believes in ghosts or them kind of things"—his listeners shivered—"but if I was to be put on my oath, I could only say what I think I saw."

Nobody, this time, had courage to repeat the former question, and William went on.

"Not more than five minutes since—hardly so much—as I was coming along the middle garden-walk—I had been earthing up my celery, and was later than usual—there was just a gleam in the sky level with the first-floor windows, and all of a sudden something flew right down and lit upon one of the buttresses that stick out on that side, you know. It was a big thing, but it made no noise, and I saw it as plain as I see any of you, all in white. I got nigher, and looked up, but before I could fix it the thing took another sweep, fluttering through the air, and fetched up in a moment on the top of the next buttress, five-and-twenty foot off if it's a single inch. There it sat still, didn't move till I got close again. I had my lantern, and turned the light full on. If that wasn't Mr. Crowther's face, why I don't see yours, Thomas, nor yours, Susan, nor yours, Mrs. Jones."

"Whatever did you do, William?" said Susan, pressing closer.

"I looked my hardest," replied the gardener, "but while I looked the thing was gone—vanished altogether."

"And was it like master?" asked Thomas.

"Two peas ar'n't liker. White whiskers, flat features, and, if I may so express myself, wrapped up in a shroud!"

"His very winding-sheet!" exclaimed Mrs. Jones.

"And now," said William, "please to satisfy my curiosity."

They made enough of their subject, and when they had repeated, with variations, their several experiences, William observed—

"It appears to me that the proper thing to do is to name all this to Mr. Vowles, and if he thinks fit, we might just look in and see if all's right in the dining-room."

Every possible objection was raised, particularly to the course last recommended; but William was firm, and his firmness gave them something like courage; courage enough to make them follow in his wake when he led the way upstairs.

A gentle tap at the door of Mr. Vowles's apartment produced no answer; a harder knock, yet nobody replied. It was found that he was not within. Had Thomas's words come true? The women shook as they brought them to mind.

"I see a light at the end of the passage in

Mr. Crowther's bedroom," said William. "He may be there."

There, indeed, they discovered Mr. Vowles, stretched at full length beside the bed, and senseless. The front of his shirt was dabbled in blood, and a deep gash furrowed his face as if some sharp instrument had scored it, though no weapon was anywhere visible. The bed-clothes were scattered about the room, one of the sheets being torn to shreds—the other was missing.

The luckless attorney was raised and carried into his own chamber. By dint of cold water, some brandy, and other restoratives, they brought him to his senses. When he opened his eyes, he looked round with a terrified air.

"Hide him from me!" he exclaimed; "don't let me see him again! Burn the will if it's found! I renounce the gift! Send for a carriage, and take me away from this detestable place! Oh, that dreadful vision! Dick Crowther! Dick Crowther! where have you gone to now?"

And once more the wretched man swooned away.

"I'll see the rights of this, though," said William, resolutely. "Give me the key, Mrs. Jones. Let anybody come with me that likes!"

Susan and Thomas followed: the other two remained with Mr. Vowles.

The thick air of the dining-room was already

pervaded by the sickening odour of death, and silently the three drew near the coffin, which rested on the table in the middle of the room. Susan, who clung to William's arm, hid her face on his shoulder as he put out his disengaged hand to raise the cloth which had been placed to cover the dead.

"Is it empty?" she whispered, not daring to turn her head.

"No!" he replied; "there he lies, though I must own I hardly expected to have seen him. Look, Thomas!"

"Ye—s," said Thomas—but the glance was a very hasty one. "Now," he added, "let's be off, we know all we want to."

"Not quite," observed William, putting back the cloth; "however, it's of no use staying here any longer."

"Double lock the door," said Thomas, as they all left the room. "And I say, William, wouldn't it be as well to have up the parson from West End? I could soon fetch him."

"Fetch the carriage first to take Mr. Vowles home; he's coming to again, I can hear. We can see about the parson by and by."

William had quite taken the lead in the house, and Thomas did as he was ordered. In about an hour he returned with a fly. Mr. Vowles, who shook like an aspen, and had lost all his presence of mind, was helped into it and driven away, and

no one now remained at Ardmore House but Mr. Crowther's servants.

V.

The story, incoherently told by Mr. Vowles, while the women were in attendance on him, was of a nature to confirm their worst apprehensions. It was all very well, they said, when they conferred together afterwards—it was all very well for Him—they did not like now to mention Mr. Crowther's name—to go back to his coffin; of course he could do that as easy as leave it; to get him to stay there was the thing.

"Sperrits," said Mrs. Jones, "can't be confined by bolts and bars. If they're uneasy when they leave the body, uneasy they'll be afterwards. He wasn't comfortable when he died, that were pretty clear. Them hands as tore down the curtains, and grappled the bed-clothes, was quite enough to show he had something on his mind at the time he was took. She shouldn't wonder if it was the will. Mr. Vowles had hinted as much. Why should he say he would give it all up if wrong hadn't been done to somebody? They all knew who that was likely to be. No—he wouldn't be laid till such as ought to had their rights which they was justly entitled to them."

The suspicions of such people as the house-keeper and her companions on matters of fact

generally point in the right direction, much that they overhear helping them to their conclusions. Mr. Vowles, however, had said sufficient to make them suppose that old Dick Crowther had made an unjust will, and, to their thinking, nothing was more natural than that he should "walk" in consequence.

"He hadn't been able to consume it in his lifetime"—her late master and a raging fire were somehow associated in Mrs. Jones's idea—"and on that account he come back to make away with it."

These arguments and opinions did not, however, make the situation more pleasant. Little as any of the household liked the attorney, they wished he had remained till the legacy question was settled: then they could "suit" themselves, for stay longer in a place that was haunted they neither could nor would. Mrs. Jones, too, felt the responsibility that, in the absence of Mr. Vowles, had fallen upon her, and if she had known where young Mr. James Crowther was living, she would have written to him of her own accord; but he had been banished some years from his father's house, and she was ignorant whether he were in England or abroad.

There was only one person who did not share in the general perturbation. This was William, the gardener, who, though occupied like his fellow-servants, with the events of the last four-and-

twenty hours, sat thoughtful from a different cause. At last, after a long silence, he spoke—

“About that noise that woke us all up last night, and you say was repeated this evening before I came in.”

“Well, William! What about it?” said they all.

“I want to know what you think it was like.”

“Like! Like nothing I ever heard before! It crept into my very marrow,” said Mrs. Jones.

“So it did into mine,” said Thomas, corroborating the housekeeper; “I felt it right under me as I lay. I thought at first it was I—do’—no’—what—stopping no end of a team of horses.”

“Wo! wo!” interposed Mrs. Jones, “was the very words it uttered, but much more awfuller, Thomas, than ever horses was spoke to.”

“Could an old man have screamed so?” asked William.

“His sperrit might,” returned Mrs. Jones.

“Sperrits and men is very different.”

“More wind in ’em,” said the gardener, jocosely.

“Oh, don’t make a joke of it, William,” cried Susan.

“It is a impious thing to do,” said the house-keeper.

“Well, but what made him call out?”

“His pains, William. He was a dying, perhaps, at that moment.”

“Very good. But he could only die once; his pains were over when you heard the cry again.”

"Only ONE knows, William! I'm afraid," added Mrs. Jones, in a trembling voice, "they was only beginning."

"Where did the first sound seem to come from to-night?"

"Right overhead. In His bedroom."

"Was that before you heard Mr. Vowles fall down?"

"No—a little after."

"And how do you think Mr. Vowles cut his face?"

"He struck against the table in falling."

"Did Mr. Vowles say so?"

"No. He couldn't call anything to mind after seeing Him—that is, Master—show his teeth and make a sort of strike out with his arms."

William asked no more questions, but resumed his meditations. After a while he told Thomas he wanted him, and, taking the groom aside, he said, in a low voice:

"I mean to sit up to-night. Are you afraid to keep me company?"

To this direct appeal, Thomas could only make one reply: He was *not* afraid. And he said so the more readily that he put greater trust in William's courage than his own. The men slept together, and to be alone in his bed was the worst alternative.

"Well," said William, in a cheerful tone, returning to his seat and addressing the women,

"you need have nothing to fear to-night. Thomas and I are going to mount guard till the morning. Don't say a word about it, Susan: we mean it. Time for supper, Mrs. Jones! A little extra beer will do us no harm."

The meal was eaten, the kitchen cleared, and the gardener and groom were left together.

VI.

"Now they are gone," said William, "I'll tell you, Thomas, what I'm going to do. I didn't care to name it before Mrs. Jones and the girls."

"What?" asked Thomas.

"This," replied the other. "There's foul play of some kind going on in this house. What it is I don't know, but I mean to try and get to the bottom of it. I don't believe a word about the old gentleman walking."

"But you saw him yourself, William."

"Somebody very like him, I must confess. When I saw Mr. Crowther, he was in his coffin."

"Who was the other, then?"

"Old Nick, maybe. But that's the mystery. I suspect thieves. They think to frighten us all by their strange noises, and then rob the place. I intend to spoil their game."

"How?"

"You shall see. Wait here a minute."

William left the kitchen, and shortly returned

with a gun in one hand and a powder-flask and shot-belt in the other.

"This," he said, laughing, "keeps the birds off in summer: it must keep off thieves in winter, or pepper 'em if they come. Those chaps don't like the report of fire-arms."

William then drew the old charge, eased the hammer, tried the trigger with his thumb, loaded the gun, and put a fresh cap on the nipple. When he had prepared his weapon, he set it upright in the chimney-corner, and invited the groom to help him out with the beer. To this proposition Thomas gave a prompt assent, and thus gently sipping and nodding to each other's good health, with fragments of talk between, the time wore on towards midnight.

When the last drop was drained—nothing having occurred to disturb their conversation—William rose and shouldered his gun.

"Come along, Thomas," he said.

"Where are you going to?" asked the groom.

"Over the house," replied William.

"At this time of night!" exclaimed Thomas. "I thought you meant to stay here. I didn't bargain for this."

"I can't help what you bargained for. What's the use of our being here, if any one breaks in upstairs? Do as you please. I shall go, at all events."

Ashamed to be thought a coward, though with

none of the feelings of a hero, Thomas also rose, and said he was ready.

"Take the lantern, then, and don't show too much light."

They walked abreast, having taken their shoes off, as a precaution against noise. On the floor to which they first ascended, all was still as death: death, indeed, reigned there as silently as in the tomb. William listened at the dining-room door.

"No need to disturb that," he said, and passed on.

The bedroom underwent a visitation, reluctant as Thomas was to go in. Dreary enough, but a blank.

"Do you mean to go any higher?" inquired Thomas, whose sense of security diminished the further he left his usual haunt behind.

"Higher?" answered William. "To the roof."

Very seldom, indeed, had the inmates of Ardmore House mounted the principal staircase, not a room on the drawing-room floor being furnished.

If William the Bold proceeded with caution, depend upon it that Thomas the Timid was not less circumspect: every angle was eyed by him as if the forty thieves—of whom he had never heard—were at his elbow: it was no matter, there were forty thousand thieves and as many ghosts in his imagination.

The staircase creaked, though those who mounted were shoeless: new wood, contracted for, complains

as much as old. On the upper landing-place the broad passage was dim with the December fog, which had gradually crept up from the lower ground, and now pervaded the house.

It was chilly, and Thomas shivered : of course, because of the cold. William neither shivered nor faltered, but moved straight on.

Whoever visited that part of the house last, had left one of the doors ajar : a reason for beginning the circuit there. It opened into a broad ante-room, from a corner of which a staircase led to the attics on the garden side.

Like every other part which they had yet visited, nothing was to be heard or seen. To be seen? Stay! After advancing not more than three paces, Thomas grasped his companion's arm.

"What's that?" he said, in the very faintest whisper.

"Raise your lantern," replied William; "I see nothing."

"But I do," said Thomas. "A thing like—— oh Lord, it's Master himself! What shall we do?"

"Master, is it?" returned William. "Let us see!"

The light was flashed across the ante-room, and William beheld what might have made the bravest tremble.

Slowly, and with the laboured effort which characterized his manner of walking when he

lived, with his head poking forwards, and his long arms swaying to and fro, with cadaverous face and distended jaws, old Dick Crowther appeared silently moving towards the intruders.

William's heart beat quicker at the sight, and for a moment it quite failed him. Only, however, for one moment: in the next his courage came back.

"It may be Master, or it may be t'other one," he said, in a low, determined voice; "but whichever 'tis, I'll have a shot at him!"

"Don't!" said Thomas, quaking with dread. "He he-ears y-you!"

"He shall feel me, too! Keep the lantern steady."

The figure raised one of its arms in a menacing attitude. The hand was then lowered, and seemed to rest on the projecting balustrade of the staircase, with one finger pointing downwards. William cocked his gun and paused before he raised it to his shoulder. At that instant the figure disappeared.

"Gone!" exclaimed William, in astonishment.

"Oh no, I wish it was," said Thomas, fascinated by fear; "I see him still—on the top stair. He is shaking his hand again!"

At those words William levelled and fired.

There was a loud report, but it was lost in the piercing "Woe! woe!" which immediately filled the air.

"Give me the lantern!" said William. "I'll follow him up. I've hit him!"

"Don't be a fool!" cried Thomas, striving to detain his companion. "He'll carry you off with him to——"

Before Thomas could articulate the place he meant to name, William had rushed up the staircase.

The scene just enacted had been a terrible trial to the poor groom, but, left in darkness and suspense, his condition now was worse. Afraid to stir hand or foot, he stood stock still, in momentary expectation of being seized upon. He began the Church service in his fear:

"'When the wicked man——'"

He got no further: a loud shout calling him by name made him fall on his knees, and took away his utterance.

Again his name was shouted, and Thomas recognised William's voice; he tried to reply, but his own was too feeble to make itself heard, and once more silence prevailed. Not long, however, for presently the light gleamed from above, and William descended. He looked composed but pale, and as he held out the lantern for Thomas to take, the groom observed that his hand was red with blood.

"For God's sake! what have you done?" he asked.

"I'll tell you, Thomas, when we get down-

stairs. I have seen something I didn't expect to see."

"Woe! woe!" A pause. A fainter cry: "Woe! woe!" Fainter still: "Woe! woe!" And with the last prolonged note the sound died away altogether.

"You'll not hear it again," said William. "I expect that was about his last."

VII.

On the third day after Mr. Crowther's death, a stranger came to Ardmore House, and asked for the housekeeper. Though altered by sickness and privation, the change was not sufficient to conceal his identity, and Mrs. Jones recognised Mr. James Crowther. The interview was grave, and full of deep interest. The housekeeper told him all that had lately happened, and more than the reader yet knows. There was no one to contest the rights of the eldest son—no will to bar him from taking possession of his father's property.

We pass over the details of the funeral to follow the footsteps of the heir, as, accompanied by William, he ascended to that part of the house where the figure shot at by the gardener had disappeared.

William led his young master to an attic, used as a store-room for keeping apples and vegetables for winter use. On a heap in one corner a dark object was coiled up, and a torn sheet, stained

with blood in several places, was spread out beside it.

"This, sir," said William, dragging the object nearer the light, "was the cause of all our trouble."

Mr. James Crowther had only arrived in England two days before, in a vessel which brought him from the East, whither he had adventured to better his fortunes, and the first thing that greeted him was a paragraph in the *Times* obituary, announcing his father's death.

He looked attentively at what was before him.

"I have been in Malacca," he said. "These creatures are common there. It is a Gibbon, or long-armed ape. Some call it the 'Woo-woo,' from the cry it utters. Its habits are predatory, and it is very fierce when opposed. There can be no doubt it went down to warm itself when it was seen in my father's chamber. Very likely it had been there before."

"I should say so, sir," said William, stooping: "look at these bits of paper; they were lying just under the body. He must have brought them, for I didn't, and nobody else comes here but me. They have writing on them."

There were two pieces of paper, mere strips, with marks of teeth indented. On the first was written, in a large official hand, "I bequeath to my only son, James Crowther——" The rest was torn away. On the second: "the whole of my real

and——” a gap ; then followed “ after all my just debts are paid.” To this last were appended the signatures of Richard Crowther and the attesting witnesses.

“ The creature,” said Mr. James Crowther, “ must have picked up the will, and eaten all but these fragments.”

That was the most probable conclusion. Another, afterwards verified, was that the animal had escaped from the Zoological Gardens ; but to this hour there are many, and Thomas the groom is amongst the number, who firmly believe that Ardmore House is haunted by old Dick Crowther.

Dragons, Griffins, and Salamanders.

BARTHOLOMEW DE GLANVIL, a learned English Cordelier, who flourished in the middle of the thirteenth century, in a book which he wrote, having for its title, "*De Rerum Proprietatibus*," gave himself infinite trouble to ascertain what was what on a multiplicity of subjects which never had any real existence. Including Natural History amongst his researches, he went largely into the question of dragons, griffins, salamanders, and other creatures of the genus—Harris. In the chapter specially devoted to the properties of beasts, which have magnitude, strength, and power in their brutalities, he discourses as follows, on the subject of the aforesaid apocryphal animals, which he, as well as everybody else at that time, most implicitly believed in. Relying upon the authority of Isidore of Seville, who, being a saint, was more behind the scenes than most folks, he tells us that the dragon is larger and longer than any other kind of serpent. The members of this family, which has furnished art with so many

striking illustrations, reside, he says, in deep caverns, from whence they frequently go flying forth, troubling the air with their pestilential breath, which they belch out in volumes of mingled smoke and flame. In the glare of the sun this vapour resembles fire; in the shade it has the appearance of a dense grey cloud. It would seem more natural that these distinctions should be reversed, but Glanvil must be allowed to tell his story his own way. This poisonous breath is of so mortal a nature, that whomsoever it reaches experiences the sensation of being burnt and scalded, the skin rising instantaneously into enormous blisters. It has the property, also, of causing the sea—when they float over it—to swell as if under the influence of a tempest. So much internal caloric have these animals—so fully do they justify the invocation of Richard the Third, who calls on fair St. George to inspire his soldiers with the spleen of fiery dragons—that, when they rise in the air, they whistle and put out their tongues, drawing the wind towards them, in order to cool the intense heat generated by their venom. Sharp are their teeth, and pointed; crested their heads; fearful their talons, and tremendous the strength that abides in their tails. Their caudal extremity is, indeed, the dragons' chief weapon, for, though they can poison their antagonists, if they please, by simply breathing upon them, they prefer the bolder course of knocking them over

with their tails. "There is no beast, however monstrous," says Glanvil, "that they cannot kill in this wise."

Antipathies between certain animals, as we know from old writers, are often very strongly marked, but none exhibit so marvellous a propensity for hating each other as the elephant and the dragon. Dr. Johnson, who liked a good hater, would have been a great dragon-fancier; for I take it that the originator of the quarrel began with the winged perturbator, whose anger was a thing to be feared.

"Come not between the dragon and his wrath!" exclaims King Lear; and certainly, after reading Glanvil's account of the way in which he slays his foes, no one in his senses would like to interfere in his feuds. He has a motive for his enmity to the elephant, which I should not exactly call hatred, but self-interest. "The dragon," says Glanvil, "desires the death of the elephant, because the blood of that animal being cold" (which it is not) "allays the great heat and ardour of the dragon's poison, and therefore he drinketh it." To get at his adversary is the next thing; so the dragon settles upon a tree in the forest which the elephant frequents, and, when he perceives him approaching, artfully lowers his tail, and twisting it round the huge legs of the quadruped, throws him to the ground and kills him. Should the elephant, however, be up to

that dodge, he makes for the tree on which the dragon is perched, and tries to uproot it ; whereupon the dragon drops upon the elephant's shoulders and bites him between the ears, at the same time whisking his eyes out with his formidable tail. A raw once established, the dragon sucks the elephant's blood at leisure until he falls ; but if he is not nimble he runs the risk of being crushed by the descent of his foe,—“and thus,” observes Glanvil, “they are frequently both killed at once.”

The dragon is a thirsty soul, and St. Jerome attests the fact when alluding to the Prophet Jeremiah's description of the curse of drought (chapter xiv., verse 6) ; he says, “Scarce can he assuage his thirst when in a river.” This perpetual desire for drink is also a reason for his being everlastingly wide awake. To catch a weasel asleep, is a proverbial expression ; but the watchfulness of the weasel is nothing to that of the dragon, which, day and night, lies waiting for its prey. A recalcitrant minister who has a following, is described as upsetting the coach, when he withdraws with his tail from the cabinet to which he belongs ; but the dragon with his tail is in the habit of upsetting boats, by taking a seat amongst the passengers. “When,” says the learned Glanvil, “he espies a boat at sea, with the wind filling the sails, he goes aboard to get as much of the breeze

as he can to cool himself; but his great weight sends the boat to the bottom, and therefore when the sailors perceive him approaching they haul their sails down."

Should any one wish to know where the dragon is generated, let him understand that the mightiest of its kind are brought forth in the hottest parts of India (a locality famous, as we know, for griffins), and in the live volcanoes of Ethiopia. Solinus is the authority for the latter assertion, which modern African travellers may contradict, if they please. I have spoken of the dragon in connexion with the fine arts, meaning principally the subjects which he has furnished to the most celebrated painters, from the immortal Raffaele to the unknown limner, the proofs of whose genius we admire in Bishopsgate-street. But he contributes in a more material way, for, according to Pliny, cinnabar, that brilliant colour, is nothing more than the elephant's blood vomited by the dragon when the latter receives his *coup de grace* in the mutually deadly struggle. It is only of late years that the resin called dragon's blood has been excluded from the pharmacopœia, where it formerly occupied a place as an astringent. The blood of dragons was held in great esteem by some—the Ethiopians, for instance—who, according to Solinus, as he is rendered by Father Corbichon, employ it as a remedy against excessive heat; they moreover eat dragon's flesh as a cure

for several maladies. "For they know how to extract the poison from the flesh, which, indeed, exists only in its tongue and its gall. And this is what David means in his psalm, where he says: 'Lord, thou hast given the dragons for meat to the people of Ethiopia!' "

The birth and parentage of the dragon—I am sorry nothing is recorded of his education—are thus described by John Leo, in his history of Africa:—"Many affirme that the male eagle, engendering with a shee-wolfe, begetteth a dragon, having the beake and wings of a bird, a serpent's taile, the feete of a wolfe, and a skin speckled and partie-coloured like the skin of a serpent; neither can it open the eyelids" (without assistance?) "and it liveth in caves." John Leo carefully adds—"This monster, albeit I myself have not seene it, yet the common report of all Africa affirmeth that there is such a one." Father Pigafetta, a great authority in unnatural history, tells us that "Mount Atlas hath plenty of dragons, grosse of body, slow of motion, and in byting or touching incurably venomous. In Congo is a kind of dragons like in bignesse to rammes, with wings, having long tayles and chaps, and divers jawes of teeth of blue and greene colour, painted like scales, with two feet, and feed on rawe fleshe. The pagan negros pray to them as gods." This predilection for paying them divine honours is a feature of Chinese admiration. The Celestial

people, says Marco Polo, “are superstitious in chusing a plot of ground, to erect a dwelling-house, or sepulchre, constructing it with the head, tayle, and feete of divers dragons, which live under our earth, whence depends all good and bad fortune.” The same travelled Venetian, under the head of Huge Dragons in Chinese Tartary, says, “They have two little feet before, nigh the head, with three talons or claws like lions, and the eyes bigger than a great loafe, very shining. They have their mouths and jaws so wide that they are able to swallow a man ; great sharpe teeth ; nor is there any man, or other living creature, which may behold those serpents without terror : these are found lesse of eight, six, or five paces long” (the larger ones are described as ten paces in length, and in thickness ten spans), “which are taken after this manner. In the day-time they use to lie hid, by reason of the heat, in holes, out of the whiche they goe by night to seeke their prey, and devoure whatsoever they get—lions, wolves, or others ; and then goe to seeke water, leaving such a track with their weight in the sands, as if some piece of timber had been drawne there. Whereupon the hunters fasten under the sands sharpe iron prickes in the usuall track, whereon they are wounded and slayne. The crows presently ring his knell, and by their craving cries invite the hunters, which come and flay him, taking forth his gall, profitable for divers

H.

M

medicines (amongst other things, for the biting of mad dogs, a penie-weight given in wine; and for women in travell, for carbuncles and pushes), and they sell the flesh dear, as being exceedingly delicate."

There is, it seems, one way in which you may get the better of a dragon, provided you are addicted to the black art—not paper-staining with ink, but necromancy. "This creature," says Albertus Magnus, "is greatly afraid of thunder, and the magicians, who require dragons for their enchantments" (vide the witches' incantation in *Macbeth*—"scale of dragon"), "get drums on which they roll heavily, so that the noise is mistaken by the dragons for thunder, and then they are vanquished. Then the enchanter bestrides the dragon, and flies through the air on his back. But frequently the dragon sinks under the magician's weight and the length of the journey, and falls with his rider into the sea, where they are both drowned."

After all that has been said of the dragon's poisonous breath, it is satisfactory to learn (from Pliny) that he has no venom proper "in him;" on the contrary, after he is dead and done for—in the way Saint George, or his humorous prototype, Moore of Moore Hall, settled him—his remains are highly medicinal. "The eies of a dragon," says Pliny, "preserved drie, pulverised, and incorporat with hony into a liniment, cause those

who be annointed all over to sleepe securely, without any dread of night-spirits, though otherwise they were fearfull and timorous by nature. Moreover, the fat growing about the heart of a dragon, lapped within a piece of a bucke's or doe's skin, and so tied fast to the arme with the nerves or sinews of a red deere, is very available, and assureth a man good success in all suites of law." With every kind of respect for this recipe, I should greatly prefer to learn that my solicitor had secured Mr. Edwin James or Serjeant Ballantine, in preference to any amount of dragon's fat. In the same way, I think Mr. Ashley would be more serviceable, if I wished to be introduced to Lord Palmerston, than "the first spondyle or turning-joint in the chine of a dragon," which "doth promise an easie and favourable access unto the presence of great lords and potentates," or than the teeth of a dragon, which has the property of mitigating the rigour of high personages, and causing them to incline to the petitions and requests of those who present themselves before them. If you wish for success in everything you undertake, you have only to go to Savory and Moore, and get them to make up the following prescription:—"Take the taile and head both of a dragon, the haire growing upon the forehead of a lion, with a little also of his marrow" (to be had at Truefitt's, in five-shilling bottles), "the froth, moreover, that a horse someth at the mouth

who hath woon the victory and prize in running a race" (apply to Sam Scott or John Day for this), "and the nailes besides of a dog's-feete" (the Regent-street gentlemen will furnish any quantity): "bind all these together with a piece of leather made of a red deere skin, with the sinewes partly of a stag, partly of a fallow deere, one with another in alternat course; carrie this about you, and it will work wonders!" All these admirable properties after death do not, however, prevent the dragon from being, when alive, the most formidable beast in creation; and it may, therefore, be soothing to the mind of the reader, affrighted at the terrible narrations of Glanvil, Solinus, Pliny, and the rest, to read what Cuvier says of the dragon:—"The dragon (*draco*) is a small lizard, with a long, slender, round tail; its body is covered with small scales, and on its back are two triangular membranous kind of wings, sustained by six cartilaginous rays, articulated on the spine. Under its throat is a long pouch, and there are two other and smaller ones on each side of its head, which it can swell out at will. This INNOCENT ANIMAL inhabits India, and lives on flies, which it pursues leaping from branch to branch." There are many varieties of the modern dragon, equally harmless.

When Winifred Jenkins exclaimed, in her exquisite cacology, "I've been a vixen and a griffin this many a day!" that pattern Abigail had no

desire to liken herself to a Xantippe, or to assume the attributes of the animal which Glanvil defines as being "between a beast and a bird: a beast as relates to its general form, for it is bodied like a lion; a bird with respect to its extremities, for it is headed and winged, and has the talons of an eagle." Such is the Cordelier's account of the griffin, and the heralds have adopted his version in their blazonry. Ctesias, however, paints the creatures differently. He calls them "birds with four feet, of the size of a wolf, and having the legs and claws of a lion. Their feathers are red on the breast, and black on the rest of the body." In the number of legs, Glanvil agrees with Ctesias, as well as in some absolute bird-like properties; but, treated altogether as a bird, the griffin must certainly be looked upon as a *rara avis*. Hear Glanvil: "The claws of the griffin are so large and ample, that he can seize an armed man by the body as easily as a hawk a little bird. In like manner he can carry off an horse, an ox, or any other beast, in his flight, when he sets his claws in them. So great is the strength of his wings, that by their mere motion the wind will knock a man down; so large and widely spread are they, that if he were to fly over a street" (the dwellers in which he would slightly astonish), "his wings would touch the houses on both sides. It is no wonder," continues Glanvil, "that his claws are so large, seeing that his nails are as long as the horns

of an ox. The proof of this is shown in the Holy Chapel at Paris" (it is not there at this present writing), "where the claw of a young griffin hangs in the middle of the aisle, attached to a chain; it was cut off by a man-at-arms, who had been carried into the desert by an old griffin, there to be devoured by his" (or her) "little ones. This valiant man found the means of escaping after he had fought for a long time with the young griffins, in the absence of the parents" (who kindly withdrew during the combat). "And thence he transported himself by flight to a seaport, where he found the means of crossing the sea with a boatman, paying his passage" (a cheap way of travelling) "by relating his adventure. And afterwards he brought the aforesaid claw to France, and deposited it in the aforesaid holy chapel, where many who have been there have seen it." The Sainte Chapelle was not, however, the only place that could boast of a relic of griffinhood, for in a note to a passage in the "Travels of Sir John Maundevile" (London, 1839, page 269), a claw "four feet long" is described as being "in the Cotton Library," which "has a silver hoop about the end, whereon is engraven, Griphi Unguis, Divo Cuthberto Dunelmensi Sacer." The same note says, "Another, about an ell long, is mentioned by Dr. Grew, in his 'History of the Rarities of the Royal Society,'

page 26; though the Doctor there supposes it rather the horn of a rock-buck, or of the *Ibex mas*." What Sir John Maundevile himself relates of the griffin may be appropriately mentioned here: "In that contree" (which he calls Bacharie) "ben many griffounes, more plentee than in any other contree. Sum men seyn, that thai hav the body upward as an egle, and benethe as a lyoun: and treuly thei seyn sothe" (Sir John pretends, then, to have seen one) "that thei ben of that schapp. But a griffoun hathe the body more gret and is more strong than eight lyouns, of suche lyouns as ben o this half; and more gret and strongere than an hundred egles, such as we han amonges us. For o griffoune there will bere, fleyng to his nest, a gret hors" (Glanvil and Sir John are both rowing in the same boat) "or two oxen yoked togidere, as they gon at the ploughe. For he hathe his talouns so longe and so large and grete, upon his feet, as thoughe thei weren hornes of grete oxen or of bugles" (buffaloes), "or of kyzn" (cows); "so that men maken cuppes of hem, to drinken of: and of hire ribbes and of the pennes of hire winges, men maken bowes full stronge, to schote with arwes and quarelle." That there may be no mistake about the rieving capacity of Sir John's griffin, a vignette on the title-page of the edition of his works already cited, and copied from an old engraving, presents us with the lively portraiture

of a griffin in the act of bearing a knight and horse through the air to breakfast his little ones, greatly to the dismay of an astonished palmer—the worthy Knight himself—who is supposed to witness the transaction.

Oriental writers, who have a special gift of exaggeration, do not confine the exertions of the griffin to such trifling work as that of only carrying off a man and horse at the same *coup*, they place an elephant in each claw and a third in his beak, and, thus weighted, the rukh, or roc (which we identify with the griffin), skims over the mountain-tops till it reaches the lonely nest, in which it makes its ponderous meal. Ibn-el-Wardee, one of these magnifying naturalists, states the length of the rukh's wings at merely "ten thousand fathoms," but Marco Polo corrects this account, and cuts them down to "sixteen paces in extent, from point to point," adding, that "the feathers are eight paces in length, and thick in proportion." He, nevertheless, believes that some messengers sent to Madagascar by the Grand Khan of Tartary brought back with them "a feather of the rukh, positively affirmed to have measured ninety spans, and the quill part to have been two palms in circumference." Every reader of the "Arabian Nights"—and that means every one who can read—remembers (in the translation of Galland's version) the perilous adventure of Sindbad and his merchant friends when they broke

the roc's egg, took out the young bird, and roasted it. All, however, are not equally familiar with the story told by Ibn-el-Wardee, on the authority of a certain El-Maghrabee, which is given by Mr. Lane in the notes to the twentieth chapter of his translation of the world-famed "Entertainments." The details given by El-Wardee are curious enough to justify reproduction here. "He (El-Maghrabee) said that he made a voyage in the Sea of China, and the wind drove them to a large, wide island, where the people of the ship landed to procure water and fire-wood, taking with them axes, and ropes, and water-skins, and he was with them. And they saw upon the island a dome, white, of enormous size, shining, glistening, more than a hundred cubits high. So they went towards it and approached it, and lo ! it was the egg of the rukh. They began to strike it with the axes, and with masses of rock, and with wood, until it broke, and disclosed the young rukh, which was like a firm mountain ; and they caught hold of a feather of its wing, and pulled it, whereupon it became dissevered from the wing ; and the formation of the feathers was not complete. After this they killed the bird, and carried away as much as they could of its flesh. They also cut off the lower portion of the feather, from the extremity of the quill-part, and departed. And some of those who entered the island had cooked of the flesh, and eaten. Among these were old men with white

beards ; and when they arose in the morning, they found that their beards had become black ; and not one of the people who ate became grey after that : wherefore they said, that the stick with which they stirred what was in the pot with the young rukh was of the tree of youth : but God is all-knowing. And when the sun rose, and the people were in the ship, and she was proceeding with them, lo ! the rukh (the old bird) approached, coming down like a vast cloud, having in its claw a fragment of a mountain, like an enormous house, and bigger than the ship. And when it came over the ship, in the sky, it cast down the stone upon her, and upon those who were in her. But the ship was swift in her course ; so she got before the stone, which fell into the sea, and its fall occasioned a most terrible commotion there. God, says the narrator, decreed us safety, and delivered us from destruction." But whether the roc and the griffin be one and the same, or two distinct (apocryphal) creatures, matters little : they are confessedly a very dangerous sort of wild-fowl. Gomara, who, in comparison, writes soberly with regard to griffins, speaks of the Mexican variety in these words : " The gryffons, in time past, did cause the vale of Acatlan to bee dispeopled, for they were great devourers of men, and their abiding was in the Mountaines of Tesacan. They were bigger than a lion, with a kind of haire and no feathers, and with their tallons and teeth

they break men's bones." Another old writer, treating of the wonders of Ethiopia, says, " In this province (Damute) there be griffons, which be fowles so bigge that they kill the buffes (buffaloes), and carrie them in their clawes as an eagle carryeth a rabbit."

The chief private occupation of the griffin, when quietly at home, appears to be that of keeping watch over a vast amount of concealed treasure, his property ; though what he proposes to do with it is, probably, as great an enigma to him as it is to most other misers. He is obliged, however, to take care of his cash, for those burglarious Scythians, the Arimaspians, who adorned their hair with gold, are always on the look-out, though they have only one eye a-piece, to steal it. This is a practice alluded to by Milton in those strikingly-descriptive lines, where, speaking of the Fiend as he careers through Space, on his way to Paradise, he says :—

As when a Gryphon through the wilderness,
With winged course, o'er hill and moory dale,
Pursues the Arimasbian, who, by stealth,
Has from his watchful custody purloin'd
The guarded gold : so eagerly the Fiend
O'er bog, or steep, through strait, rough, dense or rare,
With head, hands, wings or feet pursues his way,
And swims, or sinks, or wades, or creeps, or flies.

The hoarding propensity of the griffins has caused them to be confounded with certain ants

of most enormous size—as large, say various Greek authors, as dogs or foxes (“grete as houndes,” remarks Sir John Maundevile, who, of course, confirms the fable), which, inhabiting the regions of Taprobana (the Dardan country, according to Strabo, to the east of the Indian mountains), live on a large plateau, where, during the winter, they dig under ground, and throw up hillocks like moles. This earth contains a great deal of gold, and to obtain it from the formidable burrowers, the gold-hunters throw them pieces of venison, and, while the ants are intent on eating it, they make off with the precious metal as fast as ever they can. It is a mistake, however, to suppose that the griffin and the giant pismire have anything in common except the tradition which assigns to each a remarkable fondness for gold—a link which connects these fabulous animals with many real creatures tolerably well known to us all.

Of that royal emblem, the Salamander—adopted by Francis the First, of France, as his device, with the motto, *Nutrisco et Extinguo*—a good deal has been related, which must also be taken on trust. Bartholomew de Glanvil assigns the Ganges for its habitation, and tells us that, though it prefers the waters of that famous and sacred river, it has not the slightest objection to be transferred to the antagonistic element, fire, which, on account of the coldness of its nature,

has no effect upon it. He assures us, on the authority of St. Isidore (who gets his authority from Pliny), that the venom of the salamander is more poisonous than that of any other serpent; "for," he says, "the latter kill only one person at a time with their sting, whereas the salamander inflicts a mortal wound on many." He proves it in this way:—"For if a salamander climbs up a fruit-tree, she poisons all the fruit; and all who eat of the same die withouten remedy. So, also, when she goes into a river, she taints the water with her poison, and all who drink thereof die." This must be rather against the salubrity of the sacred stream, of whose waters, nevertheless, many millions of Hindoos drink daily without much inconvenience. However, Glanvil is strong on this point, and vows that not less than four thousand men of the conquering army of Alexander the Great (to say nothing of a couple of thousand beasts of burden) took their last draught in the salamandered flood. Returning to the anti-inflammable attributes of the creature, he informs us that "there is no beast in the world which fire does not burn save and except the salamander, which the more it is in the fire, the longer it lives there and rejoices in it." The travelling showman who said of his eagle, "The hotter the sun is, the higher he flies," must have taken a hint from Bartholomew de Glanvil, who adds, "The fact is" (this is a modern rendering

of his words) "he puts out the fire by his frigidity."

Albertus Magnus refuses to believe in the asbestine nature of the salamander, and tried to prove its impossibility by experiment. He could not, it is true, procure a real salamander for the purpose, but he operated upon large spiders; and the result, contrary to his expectation, rather favoured the idea of their being insured against fire. One of them placed upon a red-hot iron, remained there a long time without stirring, or seeming to feel the heat; another, that was urged towards a light, extinguished it, as if it had been blown out. At a much later period than the time of Albertus—so recently, indeed, as the days of Newton, Milton, and Molière—the "*Journal des Sçavants*" describes the decisive experiments which were made at Rome upon a salamander that had been brought from India. "Placed upon a brisk fire, it swelled up, and from its body dropped a liquid which extinguished the charcoal beneath it; the charcoal constantly relit, was as constantly put out in the same manner during two continuous hours, and at the end of that time the salamander was withdrawn from the flames, and lived nine months afterwards." Father Hardouin, who comments on this adventure, expresses his regret that the animal which stood fire so well was not fully described. But, while on the subject of credulity, one need not go further back than

the last century for an example. Under the head of Amphibia, in Mr. Charles Knight's "English Cyclopædia," is the following statement:—"A French consul at Rhodes (in 1789) relates that, while sitting in his chamber there, he heard a loud cry in his kitchen, whither he ran, and found his cook in a horrible fright, who informed him that he had seen the devil in the fire. M. Ponthonier" (the consul) "then states that he looked into a bright fire, and there saw a little animal, with open mouth and palpitating throat. He took the tongs and endeavoured to remove it. At his first attempt, the animal, which he says had been motionless up to that time (two or three minutes), ran into a corner of the chimney, having lost the tip of its tail in escaping, and buried itself in a heap of hot ashes. In his second attempt the consul was successful, drew the animal out, which he describes as a sort of small lizard, plunged it into spirit, and gave it to Buffon."

How the salamander is produced seems to be a puzzle to learned Pliny, for he describes it as being barren. His proof, however, is not very conclusive. "There is," he says, "no more distinction of sex in them than in yeeles, and in all those that neither lay eggs, ne yet bring forth any living creature. Oisters, likewise, and all such creatures as cleave fast either to the rockes or to the shelves, are neither male nor female." Yet

we have all heard of the oyster crossed in love !

Pliny's own statement is worth giving :—"Of all venomous beasts, there are not any so hurtfull and dangerous as are the salamanders. As for other serpents, they can hurt but one at once, neither kill they many together ; to say nothing how when they have stung or bitten a man, they die for verie grieve and sorrow that they have done such a mischief, as if they had some pricke and remorse of conscience afterwards, and never enter they againe into earthe, as unworthy to be received there." Imagine the conscience and humility of a viper, an adder, or a cobra di capella ! The salamander, however, has none of this tenderness of conscience ; he is not only able but willing to destroy whole nations at a time, and numerous examples, similar to those cited by Glanvil, are given. But there is compensation for all things : the poison of the salamander is dispelled by taking an infusion of cantharides, and the flesh of lizards proves an antidote ; new wine in the lees is also recommended, and so is new milk. The salamandrine poison is not, therefore, so formidable as at first sight it appears, and one particular fact is noticeable—swine feed on salamanders with impunity. Whenever they meet with these creatures, they go, as it were, the whole hog, and find themselves none the worse for their banquet.

Would you like to know what the (ancient) salamander resembles? Take Pliny's description : "Made in fashion of a lizard, marked with spots like stars, he never comes abroad and sheweth himself but in great showres ; for in fair weather he is not seene. He is of so cold a complexion, that if he do but touch the fire he will quench it as presently as if ice were put unto it. The salamander casteth up at the mouth a certaine venomous matter like milke ; let it but once touch any part of a man or woman's body, all the haire will fall off, and the part so touched will change the colour of the skinne to the white morpew."

As metaphysical agents the salamanders occupy a remarkable position. In the cabalistic romance of "*Le Comte de Gabalis*," by the Abbé de Villars, we find them figuring, in conjunction with the gnomes, nymphs, and sylphides, amongst the viewless spirits of air who wait on nature's mischief. It is chiefly by their alliances with mankind that the salamanders have rendered themselves illustrious. All the demi-gods were descended from them, and many other important personages, including Zoroaster, who was the son of the salamander Oromasis, by Vesta, the wife of Noah, who, having such parents, deserved the length of life—twelve hundred years—which was granted him before he was removed from earth, without dying, to the region inhabited by the salamanders ; a race, says the *Comte de Gabalis*,

composed of the most subtle parts of the sphere of fire which is "conglobed and organized by the action of universal flame." The union of Oromasis and Vesta also produced the nymph Egeria—the same who gave such sage counsels in her grotto to Numa Pompilius. Another salamander was the father of Servius Tullius ; and Hercules, Plato, Achilles, Æneas, Sarpedon, and Melchisedech, were all, according to the pretended cabalist, the sons of salamanders. The romance of the Abbé de Villars was a mystification, written in ridicule of the doctrines of Descartes.

Turning to science from the reveries of romance, Cuvier tells us what the salamander really is. He belongs to the Batrachian or Frog family, and is about as dangerous an animal as the dragon. Salamanders are divided into terrestrial and aquatic. The latter are chiefly remarkable for their extreme fecundity, the former for having the faculty of emitting a milky fluid, which is bitter, and has a disagreeable odour ; being, moreover, a poison to very weak animals—the insects on which they feed. In shape they bear a general resemblance to the lizard ; and their offspring, instead of being demi-gods, are tadpoles.



The Gunpowder Plot or Guys in Council.

Alchemy and Gunpowder.

THE day-dream of mankind has ever been the Unattainable. To sigh for what is beyond our reach is, from infancy to age, a fixed condition of our nature. To it we owe all the improvement that distinguishes civilized from savage life,—to it we are indebted for all the great discoveries which, at long intervals, have rewarded thought.

Though the motives which stimulated the earliest inquiries were frequently undefined, and, if curiously examined, would be found to be sometimes questionable, it has rarely happened that the world has not benefited by them in the end. Thus Astrology, which ascribed to the stars an influence over the actions and destinies of man; Magic, which attempted to reverse the laws of nature; and Alchemy, which aimed at securing unlimited powers of self-reward, all tended to the final establishment of useful science.

Of none of the sciences whose laws are fully understood, is this description truer than of that now called Chemistry, which once was Alchemy.

That "knowledge of the substance or composition of bodies," which the Arabic root of both words implies, establishes a fact in place of a chimera. Experimental philosophy has made Alchemy an impossible belief, but the faith in it was natural in an age when reason was seldom appealed to. The credulity which accepted witchcraft for a truth, was not likely to reject the theory of the transmutation of metals, nor strain at the dogma of perpetual youth and health ;—the concomitants of the Philosopher's Stone.

The Alchemists claim for their science the remotest antiquity possible, but it was not until three or four centuries after the Christian era that the doctrine of transmutation began to spread. It was amongst the Arabian physicians that it took root. Those learned men, through whom was transmitted so much that was useful in astronomy, in mathematics, and in medicine, were deeply tinctured with the belief in an universal elixir, whose properties gave the power of multiplying gold, of prolonging life indefinitely, and of making youth perpetual. The discoveries which they made of the successful application of mercury in many diseases, led them to suppose that this agent contained within itself the germ of all curative influences, and was the basis of all other metals. An Eastern imagination, ever prone to heighten the effects of nature, was not slow to ascribe a preternatural force to this medicine, but

not finding it in its simple state, the practitioners of the new science had recourse to combination, in the hope, by that means, of attaining their object. To fix mercury became their first endeavour, and this fixation they described as "catching the flying bird of Hermes." Once embarked in the illusory experiment, it is easy to perceive how far the Alchemists might be led, nor need it excite any wonder that in pursuit of the ideal, they accidentally hit upon a good deal that was real. The labours, therefore, of the Arabian physicians were not thrown away, though they entangled the feet of science in mazes, from which escape was only effected after the lapse of centuries of misdirected efforts.

From the period we have last spoken of, until the commencement of the eleventh century, the only alchemist of note is the Arabian Geber, who, though he wrote on the perfections of metals, of the new-found art of making gold, in a word, on the philosopher's stone, has only descended to our times as the founder of that jargon which passes under the name of "gibberish." He was, however, a great authority in the Middle Ages, and allusions to "Geber's cooks" and "Geber's kitchen" are frequent amongst those who at length saw the error of their ways after wasting their substance in the vain search for the elixir.

A longer interval might have elapsed but for the voice of Peter the Hermit, whose fanatical

scheme for the recovery of the Holy Sepulchre was the cause of that gradual absorption, by the nations of the West, of the learning which had so long been buried in the East. The Crusaders, or those, rather, who visited the shores of Syria under their protection—the men whose skill in medicine and letters rendered them useful to the invading armies—acquired a knowledge of the Arabian language, and of the sciences cultivated by Arabian philosophers, and this knowledge they disseminated through Europe. Some part of it, it is true, was derived from the Moors in Spain, but it was all conveyed in a common tongue which began now to be understood. To this era belong the names of Alfonso the Wise, King of Castile ; of Isaac Beimiram, the son of Solomon the physician ; of Hali Abbas, the scholar of Abimeher Moyses, the son of Sejar ; of Aben Sina, better known as Avicenna, and sometimes called Abo-hali ; of Averroes of Cordova, surnamed the Commentator ; of Rasis, who is also called Almanzor and Albumasar ; and of John of Damascus, whose name has been latinized into Johannes Damascenus. All these, physicians by profession, were more or less professors of alchemy ; and besides these were such as Artephius, who wrote alchemical tracts about the year 1130, but who deserves rather to be remembered for the cool assertion which he makes in his “ Wisdom of Secrets” that, at the time he wrote he had reached

the patriarchal—or fabulous—age of one thousand and twenty-five years !

The thirteenth century came, and with it came two men who stand first, as they then stood alone, in literary and scientific knowledge. One was a German, the other an Englishman ; the first was Albertus Magnus, the last Roger Bacon.

Of the former, many wonderful stories are told : such, for instance, as his having given a banquet to the King of the Romans in the gardens of his cloister at Cologne, when he converted the intensity of winter into a season of summer, full of flowers and fruits, which disappeared when the banquet was over ; and his having constructed a marvellous automaton, called “ Androïs,” which, like the invention of his contemporary, Roger Bacon, was said to be capable of answering all questions, past, present, and to come.

To know more than the rest of the world in any respect, but particularly in natural philosophy, was a certain method by which to earn the name of necromancer in the Middle Ages, and there are few whose occult fame has stood higher than that of Roger Bacon. He was afraid, therefore, to speak plainly—indeed, it was the custom of the early philosophers to couch their knowledge in what Bacon himself calls the “ tricks of obscurity ;” and in his celebrated “ *Epistola de Secretis*,” he adverts to the possibility of his being obliged to do the same thing, through “ *the greatness of the*

secrets which he shall handle." With regard to the invention of his greatest secret, we shall give the words in which he speaks of the properties of gunpowder, and afterwards show in what terms he concealed his knowledge. "*Noyses*," he says, "*may be made in the aire like thunders, yea, with greater horror than those that come of nature; for a little matter fitted to the quantity of a thimble maketh a horrible noise and wonderful lightning.*" And this is done after sundry fashions, *whereby any citie or armie may be destroyed.*" A more accurate description of the explosion of gunpowder could scarcely be given, and it is not to be supposed that Bacon simply confined himself to the theory of his art, when he knew so well the consequences arising from a practical application of it. On this head there is a legend extant, which has not, to our knowledge, been printed before, from which we may clearly see why he contented himself with the cabalistic form in which he conveyed his knowledge of what he deemed a fatal secret.

Attached to Roger Bacon's laboratory, and a zealous assistant in the manifold occupations with which the learned Franciscan occupied himself, was a youthful student, whose name is stated to have been Hubert de Dreux. He was a Norman, and many of the attributes of that people were conspicuous in his character. He was of a quick intelligence and hasty courage, fertile in

invention, and prompt in action, eloquent of discourse, and ready of hand ; all excellent qualities, to which was superadded an insatiable curiosity. Docile to receive instruction, and apt to profit by it, Hubert became a great favourite with the philosopher, and to him Bacon expounded many of the secrets—or supposed secrets—of the art which he strove to bring to perfection. He instructed him also in the composition of certain medicines, which Bacon himself believed might be the means of prolonging life, though not to the indefinite extent dreamt of by those who put their whole faith in the Great Elixir.

But there never yet was an adept in any art or science who freely communicated to his pupil the full amount of his own knowledge ; something for experience to gather, or for ingenuity to discover, is always kept in reserve, and the instructions of Roger Bacon stopped short at one point. He was himself engaged in the prosecution of that chemical secret which he rightly judged to be a dangerous one, and, while he experimented with the compound of sulphur, saltpetre, and charcoal, he kept himself apart from his general laboratory, and wrought in a separate cell, to which not even Hubert had access. To know that the Friar had a mysterious occupation, which, more than the making of gold or the universal medicine, engrossed him, was enough of itself to rouse the young man's curiosity ; but when to this was

added the fact that, from time to time, strange and mysterious noises were heard, accompanied by bright coruscations and a new and singular odour, penetrating through the chinks close to which his eyes were stealthily riveted, Hubert's eagerness to know all that his master concealed had no limit. He resolved to discover the secret, even though he should perish in the attempt; he feared that there was good reason for the accusation of dealing in the Black Art, which, more than all others, the monks of Bacon's own convent countenanced; but this apprehension only stimulated him the more. For some time Hubert waited without an opportunity occurring for gratifying the secret longing of his heart; at last it presented itself.

To afford medical assistance to the sick was, perhaps, the most useful practice of conventual life, and the monks had always amongst them practitioners of the healing art, more or less skilful. Of this number, Roger Bacon was the most eminent, not only in the monastery to which he belonged, but in all Oxford.

It was about the hour of noon on a gloomy day towards the end of November, in the year 1282, while the Friar and his pupil were severally employed, the former in his secret cell, and the latter in the general laboratory, that there arrived at the gate of the Franciscan convent a messenger on horseback, the bearer of news from Abingdon

that Walter de Losely, the sheriff of Berkshire, had that morning met with a serious accident by a hurt from a lance, and was then lying dangerously wounded at the hostelry of the Chequers, in Abingdon, whither he had been hastily conveyed. The messenger added, that the leech who had been called in was most anxious for the assistance of the skilful friar, Roger Bacon, and urgently prayed that he would lose no time in coming to the aid of the wounded knight.

Great excitement prevailed amongst the monks on the receipt of this intelligence, for Walter de Losely was not only a man of power and influence, but, moreover, a great benefactor to their order. Friar Bacon was immediately sought and speedily made his appearance, the urgency of the message admitting of no delay. He hastily enjoined Hubert to continue the preparation of an amalgam which he was desirous of getting into a forward state, and taking with him his case of instruments, with the bandages and salves which he thought needful, was soon mounted on an easy, ambling palfrey on his way towards Abingdon, the impatient messenger riding before him to announce his approach.

When he was gone, quiet again reigned in the convent, and Herbert de Dreux resumed his occupation. But it did not attract him long. Suddenly he raised his head from the work, and his eyes were lit up with a gleam in which joy and

fear seemed equally blended. For the first time for months he was quite alone. What if he could obtain access to his master's cell, and penetrate the mystery in which his labours had been so long enveloped ! He cautiously stole to the door of the laboratory, and peeped out into a long passage, at the further extremity of which a door opened into a small court, where, detached from the main edifice, and screened from all observation, was a small building, which the Friar had recently caused to be constructed. He looked about him timorously, fearing lest he might be observed ; but there was no cause for apprehension, scarcely any inducement could have prevailed with the superstitious Franciscans to turn their steps willingly in the direction of Roger Bacon's solitary cell.

Reassured by the silence, Hubert stole noiselessly onward, and tremblingly approached the forbidden spot. His quick eye saw at a glance that the key was not in the door, and his countenance fell. The Friar's treasure was locked up ! He might see something, however, if he could not enter the chamber. He knelt down, therefore, at the door, and peeped through the keyhole. As he pressed against the door in doing so, it yielded to his touch. In the haste with which Friar Bacon had closed the entrance, the bolt had not been shot. Herbert rose hastily to his feet, and the next moment he was in the cell, looking

eagerly around upon the crucibles and alembics, which bore witness to his master's labours. But beyond a general impression of work in hand, there was nothing to be gleaned from this survey. An open parchment volume, in which the Friar had recently been writing, next caught his attention. If the secret should be there in any known language. Hubert knew something of Hebrew, but nothing yet of Arabic. He was reassured; the characters were familiar to him; the language Latin. He seized the volume, and read the few lines which the Friar had just traced on the last page.

They ran thus :—

“*Videas tamen utrum loquar in ænigmate vel secundum veritatem.*” And, further (which we translate) : “He that would see these things shall have the key that openeth and no man shutteth, and when he shall shut no man is able to open again.”

“But the secret—the secret!” cried Hubert, impatiently; “let me know what ‘these things’ are!”

He hastily turned the leaf back and read again. The passage was that one in the “*Epistola de Secretis*” which spoke of artificial thunder and lightning, and beneath it was the full and precise recipe for its composition. This at once explained the strange noises and the flashes of light which he had so anxiously noticed. Surprising

and gratifying as this discovery might be, there was, Hubert thought, something beyond. Roger Bacon, he reasoned, was not one to practise an experiment like this for mere amusement. It was, he felt certain, a new form of invocation, more potent, doubtless, over the beings of another world than any charm yet recorded. Be it as it might, he would try whether, from the materials around him, it were not in his power to produce the same result.

“Here are all the necessary ingredients,” he exclaimed; “this yellowish powder is the well-known sulphur, in which I daily bathe the argent-vive; this bitter, glistening substance, is the salt of the rock, the *salis petræ*; and this black calcination, the third agent. But the proportions are given, and here stands a glass cucurbit in which they should be mingled. It is of the form my master mostly uses—round, with a small neck and a narrow mouth, to be luted closely, without doubt. He has often told me that the sole regenerating power of the universe is heat; yonder furnace shall supply it, and then Hubert de Dreux is his master’s equal!”

* * * * *

The short November day was drawing to a close, when, after carefully tending the wounded sheriff, and leaving such instructions with the Abingdon leech as he judged sufficient for his patient’s well-doing, Roger Bacon again mounted

his palfrey, and turned its head in the direction of Oxford. He was unwilling to be a loiterer after dark, and his beast was equally desirous to be once more comfortably housed, so that his homeward journey was accomplished even more rapidly than his morning excursion ; and barely an hour had elapsed when the Friar drew the rein at the foot of the last gentle eminence, close to which lay the walls of the cloistered city. To give the animal breathing space, he rode quietly up the ascent, and then paused for a few moments before he proceeded, his mind intent on subjects foreign to the speculations of all his daily associations.

Suddenly, as he mused on his latest discovery, and calculated to what principal object it might be devoted, a stream of fiery light shot rapidly athwart the dark, drear sky, and before he had space to think what the meteor might portend, a roar as of thunder shook the air, and simultaneous with it a shrill, piercing scream mingled with the fearful sound ; then burst forth a volume of flame, and on the wind came floating a sulphurous vapour, which to him alone revealed the nature of the explosion he had just witnessed.

"Gracious God !" he exclaimed, while the cold sweat poured like rain-drops down his forehead, "the fire has caught the fulminating powder ! But what meant that dreadful cry ? Surely nothing of human life has suffered ! The boy Hubert—but no, he was at work at the

further extremity of the building. But this is no time for vain conjecture—let me learn the worst at once !”

And with these words he urged his affrighted steed to its best pace, and rode rapidly into the city.

All was consternation there : the tremendous noise had roused every inhabitant, and people were hurrying to and fro, some hastening towards the place from whence the sound had proceeded, others rushing wildly from it. It was but too evident that a dreadful catastrophe, worse even than Bacon dreaded, had happened. It was with difficulty he made his way through the crowd, and came upon the ruin which still blazed fiercely, appalling the stoutest of heart. There was a tumult of voices, but above the outcries of the affrighted monks, and of the scared multitude, rose the loud voice of the Friar, calling upon them to extinguish the flames. This appeal turned all eyes towards him, and then associating him with an evil, the cause of which they were unable to comprehend, the maledictions of the monks broke forth.

“Seize the accursed magician,” they shouted ; “he has made a fiery compact with the demon ! Already one victim is sacrificed—our turn will come next ! See, here are the mangled limbs of his pupil, Hubert de Dreux ! The fiend has claimed his reward, and borne away his soul.

Seize on the wicked sorcerer, and take him to a dungeon !”

Roger Bacon sate stupified by the unexpected blow ; he had no power, if he had possessed the will, to offer the slightest resistance to the fury of the enraged Franciscans, who, in the true spirit of ignorance, had ever hated him for his acquirements. With a deep sigh for the fate of the young man, whose imprudence he now saw had been the cause of this dreadful event, he yielded himself up to his enemies ; they tore him from his palfrey, and with many a curse, and many a buffet, dragged him to the castle, and lodged him in one of its deepest dungeons.

The flames from the ruined cell died out of themselves ; but those which the envy and dread of Bacon’s genius had kindled, were never extinguished, but with his life.

In the long years of imprisonment which followed—the doom of the stake being averted only by powerful intercession with the Pope—Bacon had leisure to meditate on the value of all he had done to enlarge the understanding and extend the knowledge of mankind. “The prelates and friars,” he wrote in a letter which still remains, “have kept me starving in close prison, nor will they suffer any one to come to me, fearing lest my writings should come to any other than the Pope and themselves.”

He reflected that of all living men he stood

well nigh alone in the consciousness that in the greatest of his inventions he had produced a discovery of incalculable value, but one for which on every account the time was not ripe.

"I will not die," he said, "without leaving to the world the evidence that the secret was known to me whose marvellous power future ages shall acknowledge. But not yet shall it be revealed. Generations must pass away, and the minds of men become better able to endure the light of science, before they can profit by my discovery. Let him who already possesses knowledge, guess the truth these words convey."

And in place of the directions by which Hubert de Dreux had been guided, he altered the sentence as follows :—

Sed tamen salis petrae,
LURU MONE CAP UBBE
et sulphuris.

The learned have found that these mystical words conceal the anagram of *Carbonum pulvere*, the third ingredient in the composition of Gunpowder.

Mother Shipton.

THERE are some names which attain a national celebrity without posterity knowing exactly why or wherefore. That of Mother Shipton is one of the most noted in the traditionary annals of this country. Her fame as a prophetess has extended throughout the land, and her sayings have become household words.

Undoubtedly there have been witches—for in that category must Mother Shipton be classed—who have played the oracle as well as she; but, as generally happens, the multitude are lost sight of in the course of time, and the wisdom of the many is eventually ascribed to one. Homer, Æsop, Solomon—to say nothing of that friend of the destitute, Joe Miller—are amongst a thousand instances of concentrated reputation. Every hour's experience, indeed, affords example of this tendency to special attribution; and there are very few of us, perhaps, who have not, at one time or

other, contributed our mite to set up the popular wit of the day.

During a recent excursion in one of the midland counties, the consideration of this question was forced upon me by a local legend of which Mother Shipton was the heroine, although nothing exists to show that she ever set her foot on the spot, and more than three hundred years have elapsed since her death. But, before I add the stone I have gathered to the general heap, it may not be out of place to relate the history and prophecies of this remarkable woman, as I have found them recorded in pamphlets now somewhat scarce.

Ursula Shipton, whose maiden name was Southiel, was born near Knaresborough, in Yorkshire, on the 6th of July, 1488: three years after the accession of Henry of Richmond to the throne of England. She was baptized by the Abbot of Beverley, and probably an uglier child was never held at the font—a contemporaneous account stating that “her stature was much larger than common, her body crooked, and her face frightful.” But, as a set-off to her personal deformity, her understanding is spoken of as having been extraordinary; and it was probably for this reason—certainly not because of her beauty—that Ursula’s hand was sought in marriage when she had reached the age of twenty-four. Her suitor, a bold fellow to venture on such a strong-minded woman, was one

Toby Shipton, of the village of Skipton, not far from York. He was, by profession, a builder, though whether he added anything to the architectural glories of the Minster, or acquired a Pecksniffian celebrity for edifices which he never helped to raise, is a point on which no information has been obtained. His fame rests entirely on the fact of his having bestowed his name on the bewitching Ursula; for, with that exception, we hear nothing at all about him. Of two things, one, as the French say:—Toby Shipton either crawled through life the most henpecked of husbands, or shuffled off his mortal coil after a very brief season of conjugal felicity. The last hypothesis is the more likely.

I am ignorant at what period of her life the gift of prophecy descended upon Mother Shipton, but, hazarding a conjecture, I should say it was as soon as she discovered the mastery she had acquired over the minds of those around her. Her first prophetic essays were probably a few ambiguous words based on shrewd observation, the results of which naturally came to pass. Her speeches then assumed a darker meaning, chance favouring the issue, or the obscurity in which they were couched leaving the event only doubtful. One lucky hit in matters of prognostication is always better remembered than a hundred failures. It is a common thing to make mistakes; a rare one to be right. Mother Shipton seems to

have been a most successful soothsayer, and with the accomplishment of those predictions which concerned her own neighbourhood her reputation spread, until, it is said, it filled the whole land; and even bluff King Harry quaked with dread when he heard the words of Ursula. The most striking story that is told of her vaticinations has reference to the fate of his great minister, Wolsey, and that of those of the monarch's most distinguished favourites. In a small volume in the British Museum, which merits the particular description of it, which I shall afterwards give, that story is thus narrated :—

“The Prophetie of Shipton's Wife in the time of King Henry the Eighth.

“When she heard that King Henry the Eighth should be king, and Cardinall Wolsey should be at Yorke, she said that ‘Cardinall Wolsey should never be at Yorke,’ which the king and cardinall hearing, being angry, sent the Duke of Suffolk, Lord Piercy, and Lord Darcy to her, who came with their men disguised to the king's house, near York, where, leaving their men, they went to Mr. Besly, in York, and desired him to goe with them to Mother Shipton's house,* where, when they came, they knocked at the doore. She said, ‘Come in, Mr. Besly, and those honourable lords with you;’ and Mr. Besly would have put in the lords before

* It was one of what were called the “Dring” houses.

him, but she said, 'Come in, Mr. Besly; you know the way best, they doe not.' This they thought strange, that she should know them and never saw them; then they went into the house where there was a great fire, and they dranke and were merry." (Mother Shipton was, at all events, no curmudgeon.) "'Mother Shipton,' said the duke (not altogether requiting her hospitality), 'if you knew what we came about, you would not bid us so welcome;' shee said, 'The messenger should not be hanged.' 'Mother Shipton,' said the duke, 'you said the cardinall should never see Yorke;' 'Yea,' said shee, 'I said he might see Yorke, but never come at it.' 'But,' said the duke, 'when he comes to Yorke thou shalt be burned;' 'Wee shall see that,' said she, and plucking her handkercher off her head, she threw it into the fire, and it would not burne; then she took her staffe and turned it into the fire, and it would not burne; then she tooke and put it on againe. 'Then,' said the duke, 'what mean you by this?' She replied, 'If this had burned, I might have burned.' 'Mother Shipton,' quoth the duke, 'what thinke you of me?' 'My lord,' said she, 'the time will come you will be as low as I am, and that will be a low one indeed.' My lord Piercy said, 'And what say you of me?' 'My lord,' said shee, 'shoee your horse to the quick, and you shall do well, but your body will be buried in Yorke pavement,

and your head shall be stolen from the Barre, and carried into France;’ at which they all laughed, saying, ‘That would be a great lop between the head and the body.’” (A marginal note here says:—“This proved true, for hee rose in rebellion in the north; and by not flying when hee might, hee was taken and beheaded in Yorke, where his body was buried, and his head was stolen and carried into France, *tempore Eliz. Reg.*”) “Then said Darcy, ‘And what think you of me?’ She said, ‘You have made a great gunne, shoot it off, for it will never doe you any good; you are going to warre, you will paine many a man, but kill none.’ So they went away. Not long after the cardinall came to Cawood, and going to the top of the tower, he asked, where stands York, and how far it was thither; and said that one said he should never see Yorke. ‘Nay,’ said one, ‘she said you might see Yorke, but never come at it.’ He vowed to burn her when he came to York. Then they showed him York, and told him it was but eight miles thence, and he said that he would soon be there; but being sent for by the king, he died on his way to London, at Leicester, of a luske. And Shipton’s wife said to Mr. Besly, ‘Yonder is a fine stall built for the cardinall in the Minster, of gold, pearle, and precious stones, go and present one of the pillars to King Henry;’ and he did so.”

In this alleged prophecy by Mother Shipton

all the principal conditions were fulfilled ; the discrepancies in the story are to be laid at the door of the narrator. After Henry the Eighth had plundered his minister, and banished him to his diocese, Wolsey, travelling by slow stages, finally established himself at Cawood, preparatory to making his entry into York, for the purpose of installation.

He went thither from Scroby, a house belonging to his see, about the end of September, 1530, and the ceremony of installation was fixed for Monday, the 1st of November, following. On the preceding Friday, however, the Earl of Northumberland arrived with orders from the king to arrest him on a charge of high treason. He was at once removed in custody from Cawood, and he died at Leicester on his way from London : he certainly never entered York.

Of the three lords who visited Mother Shipton as the tradition relates, and were too curious concerning their own fortunes, the Duke of Suffolk was executed in 1554, for his share in Courtenay's insurrection, which precipitated the fate of Lady Jane Grey. Sir Thomas Percy (the Lord Piercy of the legend) suffered, in 1536, for participating in Aske's rebellion, known as the Pilgrimage of Grace ; and Lord Darcy, who was implicated in the same rising, was beheaded on Tower Hill. Respecting these noblemen, it will be observed that,

with the exception of the special warning addressed to Percy, ambiguity of phrase was Mother Shipton's great resource. As a time must have come for all men to die, the death of the Duke of Suffolk would necessarily bring him some day as low as herself; and the prediction concerning Lord Darcy was as vague as astrology itself could have framed it. With regard to the more precise indication of Percy's fate, I am afraid something was subsequently added to the dark speech of the prophetess by those who remembered in what manner he actually died. But whether the wife of Shipton (as she is modestly styled) uttered the words set down for her or not, the association of her name with such high personages affords evidence, at all events, of the repute in which she was popularly held.

Of all her contemporaneous admirers, Mr. Besly seems to have been the most devoted and the most favoured. It was to him the great lords addressed themselves before they ventured to approach Dame Ursula's habitation; and he it was who knew the way in, which the rest did not. I look upon Besly as a sort of semi-wizard, who was in the habit of shutting up his shop in the Micklegate earlier than his neighbours, in order to go and pass his evenings with Mother Shipton—Toby being defunct—and propitiating her with a horn handle to her stick of his own workmanship, he being, probably, a dealer in horn-ware,

combs, lanthorns, drinking-utensils, and so forth ; but propitiating her still more by the rapt attention which he gave to her prophecies, and the leading questions by which he brought them out. And it is, no doubt, to Besly that we are indebted for the preservation of such of the sayings of the wife of Shipton as are extant. I infer so much, as well from what has already appeared as from what more I propose to take from the curious volume already mentioned. It proceeds thus :

“Mr. Besly seeing these things fall out as she had foretold” (this is not absolutely the fact, if it be true as is generally stated, that Mother Shipton died in 1551, three years before the Duke of Suffolk) “desired her to tell him some more prophecies.” The old lady opened upon him like a flood-gate. “Mr. Besly,” said she, “before that Owse bridge and Trinity Church meet, they shall build in the day and it shall fall in the night, untill they get the highest stone of Trinity steeple to be the lowest stone of Owse bridge.” The editor of this collection of prophecies, acting as chorus throughout, gives a note of explanation here: “This came to passe; for Trinity steeple in Yorke was blown downe with a tempest, and Owse bridge was broken down with a great flood; and what they did with repairing the bridge in the day-time with the stone of the steeple fell down in the night, untill they remembering the prophesie, laid the highest

stone of the steeple for foundation of the bridge, and then the worke stood. And by this was partly verified another of Mother Shipton's prophecies, viz., That her maid should live to drive her cow over Trinity steeple."

A mystical announcement of wide-spreading evil came next :

"The day will come that the North shall rue it wondrous sore, but the South shall rue it for evermore ; when Hares kindle on cold hearth-stones ; and lads shall marry ladies and bring them home ; then shall you have a yeare of pining, hunger, and then a dearth without Corne, a woful day shall be seene in England, a King and a Queene." Chorus observes upon this : "Supposed to be meant by suppression of Abbies and other religious houses ; and at the Lord Wil. Howard's house at Naworth, a Hare came and kindled in his kitchen upon his hearth." Very good, but how about the king and queen ? Did she mean Philip and Mary ? But the prophecy seems to have been left unfinished. Perhaps it was too much for the nerves of Mr. Besly !

Mother Shipton next tried her hand at history.

"The first coming of the King of Scots shall be at Holgate town, but he shall not come in through the Barre, and when the King of the North shall be at London, his taile shall be at Edinborough." Says the interpreter : "This was

fulfilled in K. James comming in (to York); for such multitudes of people stood at Holgate bar to behold him that, to avoid the presse, he was forced to ride another way." Respecting the latter part of the prophecy, he observes: "When K. James was at London, his children were at Edinborough, preparing to come to England."

Domestic subjects follow:—"After this shall water come over Owse bridge, and a windmill shall be set on a tower; and an elme tree shall lie at every man's door; and at that time women shall wear great hats and great bands." Chorus remarks: "This is verified by the conducting of water into Yorke streets through bored elmes; and the conduit-house hath a windmill on the top that draws up the water." Of the women's great hats and bands he says nothing: they were, probably, not so remarkable as the great petticoats of the present day.

"And when," continues Ursula, "there is a lord-mayor at Yorke, let him beware of a stab. When two knights shall fall out in the castle yard, they shall never be kindly all their lives after. When all Colton hath borne crops of corne, seven yeares after you shall heare newes, then shall two judges goe in and out at Walmgate barre." Here follow the commentaries: "A lord-mayor, whose house was in the Minster yard in York, was killed with three stabs. Sir T. Wentworth and Sir John Savill, in choosing knights in

the shire, in the castle yard at Yorke, did so fall out, that they were never well reconciled. Colton hagge, in her time, was woodland ground, full of trees, which bore corne seven yeares, and the seventh year after this was the yeare of the cumming in of the Scots, and their taking of Newcastle. In the year sixteen hundred and six, two judges of assize went out at a gate in Yorke, where never any judges were known to goe out before." More remarkable things than these happen in our times unpredicted by Mother Shipton. I will back Tiptree farm against Colton hagge; and as to the way in which the judges went out of York, look at the way in which they now "goe" in—a fly from the railway station conveys all the dignified horse-hair and ermine.

It is not easy to determine whether Mr. Besly, in this place, asked Mother Shipton to favour him with a song; but, if he did not, she gave him one of her own accord, breaking out into the following doleful strain:—

" Then Warre shall begin in the spring,
Much woe to England it shall bring;
Then shall the ladies cry well-away,
That ever we liv'd to see this day."

But she soon resumed her customary rhythmical prose:—

" Then best for them that have the least, and worse for them that have the most; you shall not know of the warre overnight, yet you shall have

it in the morning ; and when it comes it shall last three yeares ; between Carden (Calder ?) and Aire shall be great warfare ; when all the world is lost, it shall be called Christ's Croft. When the battell begins, it shall be where Crookback Richard began (ended ?) his fray." Chorus interpolates in this place, "Neare Leicester, where Richard the Third was slaine in battell, where Colonel Hastings was one of the first in armes, endeavouring to seise the commission of array in opposition to others that were settling the militia."

But the prophetic fury is on the sibyl, and this is her descant :—

"They shall say to warfare for our king for half-a-crowne a-day, but stirre not (they will say) ; to warfare for your king on pain of hanging, but stirre not ; for he that goes to complaine shall not come back againe. The time will come when England shall tremble and quake for feare of a dead man that shall be heard to speak. Then will the dragon give the bull a great snap, and when the one is downe, then they will goe to London towne. Then there will be a great battell between England and Scotland, and they will be pacified for a time, and when they come to Brammore they fight, and are againe pacified for a time, then there will be a great battell between England and Scotland at Stockmore. Then will a raven sit on the cross and drinke as much bloud of nobles as of the comons, then woe is me, for

London shall be destroyed for ever after." Chorus remarks here: "It is to be noted and admired that this cross," (which cross? It is as indefinite as "this Turk" in Lord Bateman's ballad,) "in Shipton's days, was a tall stone cross, which ever since hath, by degrees, been sinking into the ground, and now is sunke so low, that a raven may sit on the top of it, and reach with her bill to the ground." Chorus, however, says nothing about the utter destruction of London. Probably it had not occurred in his time.

I can fancy—still not so vividly as I could wish—the awe-stricken astonishment of Mr. Besly as he listened to what follows:

"There will come a woman with one eye, and she shall tread in many men's blood to the knee; and a man leaning on a staffe by her, say to him, 'What art thou?' And he shall say, 'I am the King of Scots,' and she shall say, 'Goe with me to my house, for there are three knights,' and he will goe with her and stay there three dayes and three nights; then will England be lost, and they will cry twice a day 'England is lost!'" (As popular orators continue to cry, though somewhat oftener than twice a day.) "Then there will be three knights in Petergate in Yorke, and (this is terrible) the one shall not know the other; there shall be a child born in Pomfret with three thumbs,"—(allow Chorus to make an observation on this prodigy: "There is a child not many yeares

since born at Pomfret with three thumbs!")—
“and those three knights shall give him three horses to hold while they winne England” (Chorus does not verify this part of the prediction),
“and all noble blood shall be gone but one; and they shall carry him to Sheriff Hutton’s castle, six miles from Yorke, and he shall dye ther, and they shall chuse an earle in the field, and hanging their horses on a thorne, will rue the time that ever they were borne—to see so much blood shed.”
(I picture to myself Mr. Besly bursting into tears at this juncture; but Ursula goes on implacably.)
“Then they will come to Yorke to besiege it, and they shall keep them out three days and three nights” (this is surely a civil war between the parts of speech), “and a penny loafe shall be within the bar at half-a-crown, and without the bar at a penny; and will they sweare if they will not yeeld” (who are these turbulent parties?) “to blow up the town walls; then they will let them in, and they will hang up the mayor, sheriffs, and aldermen” (thank heaven, “they” have hold of something substantial at last!), “and they will goe into Crouch church; there will be three knights goe in, and but one come out againe, and he will cause proclamation to be made, that any one may take house, tower, or bower for twelve yeares, and while the world endureth there shall never be warfare againe” (here Mr. Besly wipes his eyes), “nor any more kings or queenes; but

the kingdom shall be governed by the lords, and then shall Yorke be London." (Perhaps the editor of "Notes and Queries" will kindly say whether the familiar expression, "York, you're wanted!" has any relation to these coming events, for at present they have not happened.) "And after this shall be a white harvest of corne gotten in by women. Then shall be in the north that one woman shall say unto another, 'Mother, I have seene a man to-day,' and for one man there shall be a thousand women. Then shall be a man sitting on St. James's Church hill weeping his fill." (Like Besly.)

This is bad enough, but worse remains behind.

"And after that a ship shall come sayling up the Thames till it come against London, and the master of the ship shall weepe, and the marriners shall aske him why he weepeth, seeing he hath made so good a voyage, and he shall say, 'Ah! what a goodly city this was; none in the world comparable to it; and now there is scarce left any house that can let us have drinke for our money!'"

I am sorry to be obliged to say with Desdemona, "Oh, most lame and impotent conclusion!" for this is the last of Ursula's prophecies. Chorus, however, utters a parting howl, after this fashion:

"Unhappy be he that lives to see those dayse,
But happy are the dead Shipton's wife sayes:
The world old age this woman did foretell,
Strange things shall hap, which in our times have fell."

The bad grammar of "Chorus must be forgiven for the sake of his mournful rhyme.

The work from whence the foregoing extracts are taken, is a thin quarto of five or six leaves, and bears the following title: "Mother Shipton's Prophecies; with Three and XX more, all most terrible and wonderfull. Predicting strange alterations to befall this climate of England. Contents: 1. Of K. Richard III. 2. Mr. Truswell, Recorder of Lincolne. 3. Lillie's Prediction. 4. A Prophecie alluding to the Scots' last invasion. 5. Ignatius his prophecie. 6. Mrs. White's prophecie. 7. Old Sybilla's prophecie. 8. Merlin's prophecies. 10. Mr. Brightman's. 11. Paulus Grebnerus Pro. 12. A prophecie in old English metre. 13. Another antient proph. 14. An other short but pithy. 15. An other very obscure. 16. Saltma his predict. 17. A strange prophecie of an old Welsh woman. 18. Bede's prophecie. 19. William Ambrose. 20. Thomas of Astledowne. 22. Saunders his prediction. 23. A prophecie of David, Cardinall of France, &c." (A woodcut, to be described, fills up the rest of the page, and then comes the imprint, as follows: "London, printed by T. P. for F. Coles, and are to be sold at his shop at the signe of the Lambe in the Old Baily, near the Sessions House. 1663.)

The frontispiece represents "The Pope suppressed by H. 8." Henry sits on his throne, with a drawn sword in his right hand, receiving a copy

of the Bible from Cranmer, who, like the other personages introduced, is labelled with his name. The monarch's feet are both firmly set on the body of Pope Clement the Seventh, who is struggling on the dais, his triple crown fallen off, and his hands outstretched. Bishop Fisher and Cardinal Pole stand on either side of him ; the first stooping, with one hand under the Pope's arm, and the other with a hand on the Pope's body. Cromwell and others are round the throne, and the foreground is filled with despairing monks. But the woodcut on the title-page is the curiosity. Conspicuous in the centre there is a portrait in profile of Mother Shipton herself, in an attitude of prediction, with two fingers of the left hand extended. She wears a black gown, and a white head-dress like a man's nightcap, the point thrown well to the rear and curving upwards. Her dark hair straggles wildly over her face, her nose and chin are portentously hooked, and on her cheek is the sign—a large wart—which it so much gladdened the heart of Mathew Hopkins, the witch-finder, to discover. She holds a stick in her other hand, the top of which represents the head of a bird with a very sinister eye—probably the portrait of a familiar. That there may be no mistaking her for any of the celebrated beauties of the day—Henry's wives amongst them—the word Shipton is written in legible letters over her

head. But Ursula is not "alone in her glory." She is the centre of a system, of which the satellites are the Pope's head in a circle, supported by demons in animal forms; Cardinal Wolsey shut up in a castle, with a companion who resembles Charles the First; Henry the Eighth, apparently at the altar with Anne Boleyn and another person; and, more prominent than any except the prophetess herself, the renowned Mr. Saltmarsh, a prophet on his own hook. This gentleman appears, with the exception of a cincture, in the costume of Eden before the fall, and stands under a grand canopy, the curtains of which flow over his feet in ample folds; he bears a flaming torch in one hand, and a sealed book in the other. What Mr. Saltmarsh did to merit posthumous fame may be briefly told. During the period when Lord Fairfax and the generals were at Windsor, Mr. Saltmarsh, being moved by the Spirit, went thither for the purpose of predicting all manner of misfortunes. His omens do not seem to have disturbed the Parliamentary leaders, who contented themselves with asking after his health—a very pertinent inquiry; and Mr. Saltmarsh wended his way home again, having taken nothing by his motion but an illness which carried him off a few days afterwards. Fortunately for the world, he died speechless.

So much for the most attractive part of this

book, which bears the signature of Mr. I. O. Halliwell, the well-known archæologist, and was acquired by the Museum about four years ago. It is marked as extremely scarce, with an intimation that there is a copy in the Pepysian Collection. The press-mark is 8610.d. I may add that the Museum contains, moreover, a Dutch translation of the Prophecies, without the embellishments, published at Gravenhagen in 1667. Besides the preceding, there is also in the National Collection a Life of Mother Shipton, under the title of "Wonders !!! past, present, and to come, being the strange prophecies and uncommon predictions of the famous Mother Shipton, known by the appellation of the Yorkshire Prophetess. London, 8vo. 1797." This book is, in point of style, a very worthless production, but it indicates one or two points in Mother Shipton's career, not given elsewhere. We learn from it that the prophetess died in 1551—not at the stake, like Anne Askew or Joan Bocher, for she was too wise to meddle with doctrinal subjects—but quietly in her bed, her last prediction having reference to the period of her own decease. After her death a monument was erected to her memory on the high north road, about a mile from York, where, to judge by the frontispiece of this Life, she figured in the high steeple-crowned hat and costume with which her personal appearance is

usually associated. Her epitaph is said to have run thus :—

“ Here lies one who never ly’d,
Whose skill often has been try’d ;
Her prophecies shall still survive,
And ever keep her name alive.”

After this long exordium, which resembles a Puritanical grace introductory to very short commons—like the chaplain’s benediction on Sir Dugald Dalgetty’s meal at the Castle of Ardenvoehr—I proceed to the legend concerning Mother Shipton.

On a high ridge which separates the southern extremity of Warwickshire from the county of Oxford, and distant about four miles from the picturesque market-town of Chipping Norton, are still to be seen the remains of a very interesting monument, undoubtedly of Druidical origin, although ascribed by local tradition to the agency of Mother Shipton. Archæologists know this monument by the name of Rollrich Stones ; but the inhabitants of the adjacent villages of Great and Little Rollewright give the separate parts various designations illustrative of their own belief. The principal feature of these remains is a group of stones forming a ring, which is not completely circular, the longest diameter, from north to south, being nearly thirty-six yards, and the shortest not quite thirty-five. Originally they all stood upright, but not more than seven-and-twenty of the

number, which is stated to have been sixty-five, remain in that position, the rest lying prone on the earth, half hidden by the soil and long waving grass. Owing to this circumstance it is very difficult to count them correctly ; and the peasants say, with an air of mystery, that it is not possible to do so, no two persons agreeing in the tale, nor the same number being arrived at by a repetition of the experiment. I found this true in my own instance, and the number I reckoned certainly differed considerably from the result of an attempt made by another person. As we had not time to verify our separate statements or correct our own mistakes, the magical difficulty was left unsolved. None of the stones in this circle are more than five feet high, and some of them are barely twelve inches above the ground ; but at a distance of about eighty or ninety yards to the eastward, stand five others, of considerable height, the tallest being nearly eleven feet, which, as they lean towards each other, with an opening from the west, are called the Five Whispering Knights. Nor are these all that remain, for, at about the same distance from the circle, to the north-east, and in a field by itself, divided by the road which separates the counties, stands one large stone in solitary majesty, popularly known as the King's Stone. It is upwards of five feet broad and between eight and nine feet high, and from its twisted shape and rough-grained surface (which it

may well present, after a buffet with the weather of a couple of thousand years) is the most remarkable of the series. The learned Camden, and, after him, Dr. Plot, the author of the "Natural History of Oxfordshire," pronounced the monument to be a memorial erected by Rollo the Dane, who won a great victory somewhere about the beginning of the tenth century; but their speculations were set at rest by Dr. Stukeley, who, with greater reason, declared the remains Druidical, the circle having been a temple, the five detached stones a cistvaen, or cromlech, and the solitary one a cardinal point. Independently of the form of the larger group, Dr. Stukeley relied upon its etymology, deriving Rollrich, not from Rollo the Dane, but from Rholdrwyg, the wheel or circle of the Druids; and this, without doubt, is the true interpretation.

Now for the popular opinion of the monument. The stones, according to universal acceptance amongst the peasantry, are neither more nor less than a petrified camp or army. Never look for chronology in these matters, but take the legend as you find it. If you believe that men have once been turned into stone, it is not worth your while to question who performed the feat, or to ask when it happened; so the story runs as follows:—

A certain ambitious warrior, being minded to reduce the whole of England beneath his sway, set out one day (from what place is not stated) with a

train of five knights and a well-appointed band of sixty fine hardy soldiers, to effect his meditated conquest. Advancing from the south in his progress towards the borders of Warwickshire, where the issue of his adventure, as it had been darkly foretold him, was to be determined, the king halted his little army for the night on the edge of Whichwood Forest, not far from the spot where now stands the little village of Shipton-under-Whichwood. His reason for pausing there is alleged to have been his desire to confer with the wise woman, who dwelt at Shipton at that time, and who afterwards bequeathed her name to the place. The king's council was composed of the knights already mentioned; but on this occasion, seeking advice from none, he left the camp alone—though not unobserved by the five, who followed at a distance—and proceeded to the dwelling of Mother Shipton. He was seen to enter her hut, but what took place within has been only imperfectly guessed at, none of the knights having courage enough to venture sufficiently near to hear exactly what passed between their leader and the dreaded witch. It is believed, however, that in order to obtain her assistance, the warrior proposed a certain compact; but the conditions which Mother Shipton strove to exact must have been too hard, for high words arose between the two—so much was ascertained by the listeners before they discreetly withdrew—and

her harsh voice was heard to threaten the warrior, who came forth in great wrath from the hut, and strode back to his tent. How he spent the remainder of the night is not on record; but at break of day he was in the saddle, marshalling his men; and long before the sun had gilded the tops of the forest trees, he led them across Lynham Heath, and skirting Knollberry Banks, left the old Saxon mart of Ceapen-Northtown behind, and plunged into the woody glades that yet interposed between him and the object of his desires. After a toilsome march of five hours, he came to a steep ascent, where the corn grows now, but which then was a desert waste. Laboriously his followers climbed the hill, nor rested until the crest of the ridge was nearly gained. Here they paused, and the five knights stood some distance apart, while their eager leader spurred towards a slight eminence, which, from that point, was all that impeded the view into the broad valley beyond, the haven of his expectations. Suddenly, a female figure appeared on the rising summit of the knoll, and, in the clear morning light, the five knights, who watched the motions of their chief, recognised the unearthly lineaments of Ursula Shipton. The events of the previous night came back to their memories, and they whispered among each other. For an instant, the bold adventurer was lost to their view, but presently he re-appeared; and, as he

breasted the last ascent, they heard his voice :
“ Out of my way, Hag ! ” he cried—

“ If Long Compton I may see,
Then king of England I shall be ! ”

But another voice—the voice of Ursula Shipton—exclaimed :

“ Rise up, hill ! Stand fast, Stone !
King of England thou shalt be none ! ”

She waved her arm as she spoke ; the earth swelled ; and the ambitious chief, the five whispering knights, and the whole of the warrior’s mesnie, were at once transformed to stone !

Six paces further, and the village of Long Compton had been distinctly seen ; but, where the King’s Stone buries its base in the ground nothing is visible but the hill-side.

There is yet another tradition connected with Rollrich Stones.

A certain man of wealth, the lord of the manor of Little Rollewright, Humphrey Boffin by name, resolved to remove the King’s Stone to the courtyard of his own dwelling, about a mile distant, at the foot of the hill. The country people dissuaded him from making the attempt, telling him that no good would come of it ; but he, being an intemperate, violent man, would not be thwarted of his headstrong will, and commenced the attempt. He thought to accomplish his purpose with a waggon and four horses, but, though the

latter were of a famous breed and remarkably strong, they could not stir the stone a single inch. He then yoked other four to the team, but still without success; again and again he made the same addition, nor was it until four-and-twenty horses had been attached to the load that he was able to effect its removal. At length Humphrey Boffin triumphed, and the King's Stone stood in the centre of his own courtyard. But his triumph was of short-lived duration, for no sooner had the shades of night appeared, than an indescribable tumult appeared to surround his house, waxing louder and fiercer as the night drew on; nothing was heard but groans and shrieks, the clash of weapons, and the direful din of battle, which noises lasted till the morning, when all again was still. Humphrey Boffin was greatly frightened; but, for all that, his heart was not changed, and in spite of omens he swore he would keep the stone. The second night was worse than the first; on the third, the uproar of the two were combined, and then Humphrey Boffin gave in. Adopting his wife's counsel (for she, clever woman, saw at once where the shoe pinched), he agreed to restore the King's Stone to the place where Mother Shipton had commanded it to stand. But the difficulty was, how to accomplish the task. It had taken four-and-twenty horses to drag the stone downhill. How many must there be to carry it up again? A single pair settled the question:

they were no sooner in the shafts than they drew the waggon with perfect ease ; nor did they stop to breathe nor did they turn a hair on their uphill journey ! The country people, however, were right. The attempt did Humphrey Boffin “ no good ;” the civil war breaking out shortly afterwards, his homestead was burnt and his house ransacked by Cromwell’s troopers, and he himself, endeavouring to escape—without Mrs. Boffin—tumbled into a well and was drowned. The lady, it is added, eventually consoled herself by marrying the captain of the troop, who, when the wars were over, became a thriving farmer and leader of the conventicle at Banbury.

Strangers in search of Rollrich Stones may find them more quickly than I did by directing their steps to a clump of lofty fir-trees, which, grown within the arena of the Druid temple, forms a landmark for several miles round.



Curiosities of Ornithology.

Bird History.

A CERTAIN learned physician, named Peter Belon, a native of the town of Le Mans, the capital of what was then the province of Maine, but is now the department of the river Sarthe, in France, bethought him that very little was known in his native country at the time he lived—the middle of the sixteenth century—of natural history ; and being moved by the example of Aristotle (at the trifling distance of nearly nineteen hundred years), he resolved, having been a great traveller and eke a great observer (two persons not always united), to give his fellow-citizens and the world the benefit of his experience and opportunities, and take away the reproach which lay like a shadow over the land.

Prepared by much study for the cultivation of his favourite pursuits, he left France in the year 1547, being at that time twenty-nine years of age, and travelled successively through Germany, Bohemia, Italy, Greece, Egypt, Palestine, and Asia Minor, returning

to Paris after three years' absence with a large and valuable collection of plants and specimens of natural history, which he then occupied himself in arranging, preparatory to the publication of the knowledge he had acquired. The first work which he produced was a history of strange fishes and serpents, under the title "*De Aquatilibus*;" but, tempting as the subject is, I do not at present intend to examine it, having another of his productions before me, which (from the fact of its being a borrowed book, and liable, therefore, to sudden seizure by its owner, who otherwise would never get it back) more immediately claims my attention.

This coveted volume is the celebrated "*History of the Nature of Birds*," with their descriptions and lively portraits, taken from nature, and written in seven books, and is, perhaps, the principal work on which is founded Peter Belon's claim to be considered the father of modern natural history. In the preface to it he promises—and he keeps his word far better than might have been expected—that nothing shall appear in these books which is not perfectly true; there shall be no false descriptions or portraits of supposititious animals; nothing, in short, that is not to be found in nature. Appropriate to the publication of a work on ornithology, Peter Belon caused this volume to be printed, in the year 1555, by William Cavellat, in front of the

college of Cambray, in Paris, at the sign of the Fat Hen (a sure sign that Peter Belon came from Le Mans, a city famous for its poultry); and that there should be no doubt of the latter fact, the title-page also bore the living portraiture of a domestic fowl in very high condition, enclosed within a circle, on the outer rim of which was inscribed the legend "*Gallina in pingui*," an inscription that need not again be translated. A portrait of Peter Belon, as he appeared to the justly-admiring world, at the age of thirty-six, also embellished the volume. The learned physician appears to have been a man with a good, sensible, honest countenance, wearing a large Crimean beard, and having a cap on his head, the shape of which, fortunately, has not yet been adopted for the British army.

Like most other old authors, Peter Belon takes some time before he can get fairly under way. There are, first, the dedication to the most Christian king—Henry the Second of the name—whose humble scholar the author declares himself to be. Then follows a homily addressed to the reader, chiefly for the purpose of assuring him that, in the lively portraits of the birds which he presents (ah, could we but reproduce some of them!), he is not practising on his credulity, but that such as he represents them, the fowls are themselves, and that where he cannot get an authentic likeness he has refused to invent one.

The royal privilege to publish, sealed with yellow wax—like a bottle of good old wine—comes next, and finally appear several copies of verses in praise of the author, by certain of his friends, which latter had better be skipped, that Peter Belon's volume, which has in it a great deal that is worth reading, may unfold its pages for our gratification. It is not, however, a *résumé* of the work, or anything like it, that I intend to make, but simply a dip into it—here and there—extending some of the quaint fancies, curious digressions, and sound opinions with which it is interspersed, always desiring our reader to bear in mind that the author was a physician as well as a naturalist.

A word or two before he fairly enters on his theme, may be allowed him to describe the pains he was in the habit of taking to obtain correct information. "It was my custom," he says, "during my sojourn in Padua, to go down the Brenta every Thursday evening, voyaging all night in order to reach Venice on Friday morning, and to remain there on Saturday and Sunday, as much for the convenience of seeing birds as well as fishes; and after having conferred with fowlers and fishermen, to return thence on Sunday evening, thus losing no time by taking the night boat, and being ready to continue my studies on Monday morning. During which time, on the aforesaid days of Friday and Saturday,

there was not a single fowler or fisherman who did not bring to show me every rare creature he had been able to procure."

Commencing, then, "*ab ovo*," Peter Belon discusses the properties of eggs; but into the processes of fecundation and hatching which he describes, I do not propose to enter, the gastro-nomic view of the question presenting more novelty. After apologizing for the peculiarity of the subject, he tells us that in his time the French way of eating eggs (they have six hundred and eighty-five ways now, if the "*Almanach des Gourmands*" speaks sooth) was by breaking them at the small end and carefully replacing the shell when emptied into the platter; while the Germans, on the other hand—reminding us of *Blefuscu* and *Lilliput*—opened their eggs at the side, and finished by smashing the shell; in which latter practice, says Belon, they followed the example of the ancients, who held it a thing of evil augury to leave the shells unbroken. Belon then proceeds to discourse on the numerous varieties of eggs, considering those of pigeons, ostriches, pea-hens, geese, and swans as ill-flavoured and indigestible—not objecting to the eggs of the tortoise or turtle—but giving the preference, like a person of taste, to those of the domestic fowl, which, he says, "are supposed by many in France to assist greatly in prolonging life;" and he instances the case of Pope Paul the Third, who

used, with that end in view, to eat two new-laid eggs for breakfast every morning. As to their shape, he remarks that long eggs are supposed to be much better eating than round ones ; but without insisting on this point, he has no hesitation in declaring that all are highly invigorating, as truffles are, and artichokes, and raw oysters. Artichokes, indeed, were so much esteemed in Belon's time, that "no great nobleman feeling himself unwell would finish his dinner without them,"—eating them by way of dessert. Belon objects to hard boiled eggs, or such as are too much fried, "on account of their engendering bad humours," but upon poached eggs (*œufs pochés*) he looks with considerable favour. In all cases he prefers plain boiled eggs (time—three minutes and a quarter) to those which are roasted ; notwithstanding the well-known proverb : "There's wisdom in the roasting of eggs." The best way of preserving eggs, he says, is to keep them in a cool place, bury them in salt, or dip them in brine.

As the chicken issues naturally from the egg, so dining upon the one is the regular sequence to breakfasting on the other. The younger your pullet, says Belon, the easier it is of digestion, though he allows you occasionally to eat an elderly male bird, when prescribed medicinally (*hormis le coq, qui est souvet pris pour medicine*). "Roasted or grilled fowls are generally the most savoury ;

those which are boiled furnish more humid nourishment to the body. The first are eaten hot, the last cold." This rule, however, does not, he tells us, always hold good:—"Because, if any one writing on the quality of the flesh of birds, happened to be in a country where the people fed on a particular kind not eaten elsewhere, and a male bird already old and tough were offered him (avenait qu'on luy presentast de quelque oyseau des-ia viel et endurcy), he ought not to conclude that its flesh is necessarily fibrous and hard." With all respect for the opinion of honest Peter Belon, I should be inclined to think that a tough old cock, whatever his nation, was somewhat difficult of digestion. I have a very vivid recollection of a fowl of this sort at a certain hotel in Abbeville, where nothing else was to be had for dinner, which the waiter assured me was not to be surpassed in tenderness; a quality he might have displayed towards his family when alive, but which certainly did not belong to him after he was roasted. It is, perhaps, on the tolerant principle of respecting other people's prejudices (I can account for Belon's conclusion no other way), that he does not exclude even birds of prey from good men's feasts. "We know by experience," he observes, (not his own experience, I hope), "what has taken place in Crete, where the young ones of the vulture which have fallen from their rocky nests near Voulèsmeni, have been proved at least as good

eating as a fine capon. And although some the inhabitants" (the greater part, I should imagine) "think that the old birds are not good to eat because they feed on carrion, the fact is otherwise for good falconers say that the hawk, vulture, and falcon are excellent meat, and being roasted or boiled, like poultry, are found to be well-tasted and tender." (Fancy a tender vulture!) "We constantly see, if any of these birds kill themselves or break a limb in hunting game, that the falconers do not hesitate to dress them for the table." In Auvergne, he adds, the peasants of the Limagne and in the mountains, too, eat the flesh of the *goivan*, a species of eagle; so that it may be concluded that birds of prey, whether old or young are tender,—an inference which I presume without doubt. One saving clause Peter Belon has, which has at all times done good service. If people generally are not in the habit of eating kites or owls, and so forth, there are some who do: "tastes merely differ"—(*les appetits des hommes ne ressemblent en aucune manière*).

The transition is easy from these delicacies to other less questionable birds, and the manner of preparing them for the pot or spit; and bringing Peter Belon to what he evidently likes—a good dinner in a general way. "You may talk," he says, "of Spaniards, Portuguese, English, Flemings, Italians, Hungarians, or Germans, but none of them, in dinner-giving, come up to the French

The latter begin with meats disguised a thousand ways (*mille petits desguisements de chair*) ; and this first entry, as it is called, consists of what is soft and liquid, and ought to be sent in hot, such as soups, fricassees, hashes, and salads !” (Hot salads are a rarity now-a-days.) The second course is roast and boiled, of different kinds of meat, as well of birds as of terrestrial animals, “it being well understood that no fish is eaten except on fast days.” The dinner ends with “cold things, such as fruits, preparations of milk and sweets.” This is the outline of a dinner only ; but when Peter Belon enters into a detailed bill of fare, the newspaper report of a Lord Mayor’s dinner pales beside it. A few of the names of these dishes—as well as they can be translated—are worth preserving. What do you think of pilgrim capons—lions—made of the white meat of pullets ; wild boar venison with chestnuts ; diamond-pointed jelly ; goslings dressed with malvoisie ; feet (whose feet ?) with infernal sauce (*pieds à la saulce d’enfer*) ; counterfeit sea-hog ; laurelled quails ; partridges with capers ; veal sausages ; hop salad ; chestnut butterflies ; golden-backed woodcock pasties ; ox-heel pasties ; plumed peacocks ; tipsy cake (*gasteaux joyeux*) ; little cabbages all hot (*petits choux tous chauds*) ; and, amongst other varieties, pomegranate salad ?

In treating of the uses to which birds have been applied, Peter Belon does not omit divination.

It is pretty clear, however, that he has no faith in the aurspices, though he lets them down gently. "These soothsayers exercised their mystery in the contemplation of the inward parts as well of birds as of other animals, when offered up for sacrifice. The question must then be asked, whether, by this inspection, they really could foretell the things that were to come, and if there were any probability, what they promised turning out true? There can be little doubt that this system of divination had a very simple origin, beginning by cajoling private persons, and promising them what they desired (which is the greatest pleasure men can receive), and afterwards, by investing it with a religious character, and turning the same to their own profit." The French soldiers, in Belon's time, imitated the Romans so far as to carry the sacred cock with their baggage when they took the field; but it was for a very intelligible species of augury,—to know, by his crowing, when the day was about to break. Belon had much too good sense to credit either the superstitions of the Romans or those of his own day, and was probably only restrained by his fear of the Church, from expressing his opinions too plainly. Passing from divination to sorcery, he says: "Every contemplative man must have had reason to despise the ignorant people who believe that sorcerers have the power attributed to them. We have seen many condemned to death; but all

have been either poor idiots or madmen. Now, of two things, one must happen : that if they do mischief, it must either be by the employment of some venomous drug put into the mouth, or otherwise applied, or by invocations. It is not often that one hears of people of quality being accused of sorcery—only the poorer sort ; and to tell the truth, no man of judgment would apply his mind to such absurdities. To prevent the common people from doing so, it is the custom once a-week to prohibit them formally. It may easily happen that one of this sort, troubled in his wits, should fancy incredible things, and even acknowledge to having committed them ; but we must set this down to the nature of their disease.” In this way sensible Peter Belon disposes of the lycanthropists and other self-created wizards. On the subject of antipathies, however, he entertains a belief that it is reasonable ; as in the case of the fox and the stork, which are sworn foes, ever since the practical jokes, I suppose, which we all know they played on each other.

Being himself a physician, Peter Belon enlarges upon the maladies of birds ; but he tells us that, with the exception of falcons, which are more especially under the care of man, they are their own doctors. “The pelican, which builds its nest on the ground, finding its young stung by a serpent, weeps bitterly, and piercing its own breast, gives its own blood to cure them.” (This is a

new reading of the old story.) "Quails, when they are indisposed, swallow the seeds of hellebore; and starlings take hemlock. The herb chélidoine (celandine, from the Greek kelidon, a swallow) derives its name from the fact that the swallow administers the juice of the plant to her young. The stork physics himself with marjoram. Wood pigeons, ravens, blackbirds, jays, and partridges take laurel; while turtle-doves, pigeons, and cocks prescribe bird-weed. Ducks and geese eat sage." (Sage enters largely into the affair, in combination with onions, when ducks and geese are eaten.) "Cranes and herons employ marsh rushes. Thrushes and many smaller birds swallow the seeds of the ivy—which would be hurtful diet for man (*qui seroit viande mauvaise à l'homme.*)" Not much worse, however, than hellebore or hemlock! But it would seem that the eagle family are exempt from the ordinary ailments of birds; for, in speaking of the Chrysaëtos, or great royal eagle, Belon tells us: "Eagles never change their place of abode, but always return to the same nest. It has thus been observed that they are long-lived. But becoming old, the beak grows so long that it becomes bent, and prevents the bird from eating, so that it dies, not of any malady, or extreme old age, but simply because it cannot make use of its beak." I fear this is not one of the facts derived from Belon's own observation.

Our fashionable ladies have a passion for cider-

down; but did they ever hear that the vulture can supply them with an article quite as soft? "Their skin," says our author, "is almost as thick as that of a kid, and under the throat is a spot about the breadth of a palm, where the feathers are reddish, like the hair of a calf; and these feathers have no quills, any more than those on both sides of the neck and under the wings, where the down is so white that it shines like silk. The furriers, after removing the large feathers, leave the down, and curry the skins for mantles, which are worth a large sum of money. In France they use them chiefly to place on the stomach" (what we call bosom-friends). "It would scarcely be believed that the vulture's skin is so stout, if one had not seen it. Being in Egypt and on the plains of Arabia Deserta, we have noticed that the vultures are large and numerous, and the down from a couple of dozen of these would quite suffice for a large robe. At Cairo, on the Bezestein, where merchandise is exposed for sale, the traveller may obtain silken dresses lined with the skins of vultures, both black and white."

Belon was a great observer of all the birds of prey, and appears to have taken many notes of their habits while living near the Monts d'Or, in Auvergne, under the protection of M. Duprat, the Bishop of Clermont. It was there he learnt the fact about the peasantry eating the goivan,

called also the boudrée, which he thus describes : " There is not a peasant in the Limagne (a great plain) of Auvergne who does not know the goivan, and how to capture him with traps baited with frogs, or with lime, but more commonly with snares. He is taken principally in the winter, when he is very good to eat, for he is so fat that no other bird comes near him in that respect. The peasants lard or boil him, and find his flesh quite as good as that of a hen. This eagle eats rats, mice, frogs, lizards, snails, caterpillars, and sometimes serpents."

That there may be no doubt about the last-named viand being food for eagles, one of Peter Belon's lively portraitures follows the statement, in which a goivan is depicted in the act of dining on a serpent, twisted into a figure of eight (as well he might be), and a number of astonished frogs and fishes scurrying away for dear life,—all save one philosophical member of the tadpole family, who, sitting on the tumultuous waves of an adjacent ditch, calmly contemplates the scene. It is observable throughout the plates in Belon's work that the smaller quadrupeds endure the infliction of being devoured alive with far greater resignation than the Reptilia. I have before me at this moment the portrait of a rabbit, on whose back a buzzard is standing as if in the act of going to sing, while the long-eared animal on which he has pounced seems to apprehend his fate no more than

if he were a music-stand. A mouse in the claws of a speckled magpie, puts on, in another plate, an air of equal indifference.

Amongst the birds of prey known to the French villagers—and to their cost—is one called by the singular name of White John (*Jan le Blanc*), or the bird of St. Martin; but why the latter name was bestowed on it, Belon is at a loss to discover. The first is obvious enough, for its belly and part of its tail are of spotless white. This fellow is very daring, and carries off fowls and rabbits from under the eyes of the owners; he feeds largely, too, upon partridges and all the smaller birds, so that he is not a Cheap John, at all events. But Belon has one comfort: White John has a natural antagonist in the Hobbyhawk; and the way they fight in the air till they tumble entangled to the ground, and are taken, is quite a pleasant thing to see (*moult plaisant à voir*). This combat is not depicted; but on the next page there is a striking delineation of the manner in which a falconer lures a bird of prey. He does it in this wise: a hawk having caught a partridge, stands on its back in the air, quietly devouring it, and the cunning fowler takes this opportunity of approaching with the leg of another bird in his hand, which he offers on his knees to the hawk, in the expectation, apparently, that the greedy bird of prey will give up the whole for a part. Of the share which the falconer's dog has

in the transaction I say nothing ; because, though in the foreground of the picture, he is not a quarter the size of the victim partridge. It must be confessed that Belon's descriptions are more satisfactory than the artist's illustrations. This remark, however, does not apply to the actual portraits of the birds, which are, in most instances, very accurate. Nothing, for instance, can be better done than the Royal Kite, which some in France call *Huo*, and others *Escoufle*. This bird, being a lover of carrion, is protected ; so much so, that "in England a fine is imposed on those who kill him." Belon records a pleasant piece of pastime which this kite affords the infidels :—

"The Turks who live at Constantinople take pleasure in throwing lumps of raw meat into the air, which the kites pounce upon so rapidly that they seize and carry it off before it can fall to the ground."

The Venetian nobles amuse themselves differently—not with kites, but cormorants. When the weather is calm, they go out on the lagoons in light boats, two or three dozen in company, each boat being rowed by six men, and pulled very swiftly. Having surrounded the cormorant (like French huntsmen with a fox, to prevent him from getting away, and giving them a run), he cannot rise in the air (why not?), but dives under the water, and every time he shows his head above the surface, the noblemen let fly at him with their

cross-bows, till at last he is thoroughly done up, is half-suffocated, and gives in. "It is a fine sight to behold this sport (*c'est un beau spectacle de voir un tel deduit*), and also is to see a cormorant having caught a tolerably-sized eel, which he tries to swallow, but has to fight a long time with it before he can get it down." The cormorants themselves are, oddly enough, not thought good eating by the common people, who say of them that they are "a dish for the devil" (*qui voudroit festoyer le diable, il luy faudroit doñer de tels oyseaux*); but Belon does not think them so bad as they say (*toute fois ne sont si mauvais qu'on croie*).

The stork, unfortunately, did not, when Belon flourished, enjoy the same immunity; for though he admits that the Romans despised them at table, he says, "now they are looked upon as a royal dish." He moreover tells us that the gizzard of a stork is an antidote to poison, and a remedy against squinting (*le gesier de la cigogne est bon contre les venins et qui en aura mangé ne sera louşche en sa vie*)! It appears, also, that even the ostrich, which can digest iron, is itself digested by Libyan gastronomers, who eat the flesh and sell the feathers.

This tendency to discover what birds are most eatable, is manifested throughout the volume of Peter Belon. Arriving at the noble Alectrion or Rooster of the United States, he cites the follow-

ing recipe, from Dioscorides, for the concoction of cock-broth:—"Take a fine strong old bird, and having properly trussed him, stuff him well with roots of fern, the seed of chartamus (whatever that may be), salt of mercury, and soldanella (a purgative sea-weed), and having sewn him up, boil him well down." A potage this, which bears some resemblance to "the sillakickaby of the ancients," described in "Peregrine Pickle," and, I should think, nearly as agreeable.

The majority of the birds in Belon's book are accurately described and too well-known, to afford much opportunity for quoting from what he says of their forms and habits; but now and then we meet with a *rara avis*. Such, for instance, is the "Gellinote de bois" (Gelinotte), which, though still found in the Ardennes, and occasionally a visitor to Monsieur Chevet's shop in the Palais Royal, is rare enough to merit description at second-hand. What their price may be I know not, but three hundred years ago they cost two crowns a piece, and were only seen at the banquets of princes and the wedding-feasts of great lords. "The feathers on the back are like those of the woodcock; the breast and belly white, spotted with black; the neck is like that of a pheasant; the head and beak resemble a partridge; the tail feathers are black with white tips, the large wing-feathers variegated like the owl; down to the feet the legs are feathered like the grouse." If the

gelinotte combines the flavour as well as the plumage of the birds just mentioned (omitting the owl), I should say it is worth the price which Monsieur Chevet puts upon it before he stuffs it with the truffles.

The Vanneau is another bird which, common enough in the marshy districts of France (particularly in Bourbon Vendée), is, I believe, unknown in England. It is a wading-bird, and bears some resemblance to the peacock; hence its name, corrupted from paonneau to vanneau; but the peasants call it dinhuit, on account of its cry. It is crested with five or six long black feathers, and is of changeable hue; in size it is not much larger than a plover, and is perched on very high red legs. There is no question about the estimation as a delicacy in which the vanneau is still held.

Belon has a good deal to say about quails, and the various modes of catching them. One way is by means of an instrument made of leather and bone, which, set in motion, utters a sound like the voice of the female bird, and is called cour-caillet, on hearing which the males run rapidly and are caught in the fowler's net; but this device is only effectual during the season of courting. Every one has noticed how low the quails' cages are made. Belon says, it is because they are so given to jumping and excitement that they would destroy themselves were the cages higher.

Of the crested lark (in French, *cochevis*), he tells us, on the authority of several writers of antiquity, that when made into a broth or roasted like punch—they cure the colic; we all know what capital *pâtés* are made of the lark uncrested. We learn that the woodcock—how admirable he, too, in a *pâté*—though called *bécasse* in French, on account of the length of his bill ought to be designated “*vvitcoc*,” that being an English word, which signifies “cock of the wood” and corresponds with the Greek term, “*xilomita*.” Some people, Belon says, call him *Avocœca* (blind bird), because he suffers himself to be so easily caught, and he gives a sufficiently lively description of one mode of effecting his capture. It is as follows:—“He who desires to take the woodcock must put on a cloak and gloves of the colour of the dead leaves, and conceal his head and shoulders beneath a (brown) hat, leaving only two small holes to see through. He must carry in his hands two sticks covered with cloth of the same colour, about an inch of the ends which must be of red cloth, and leaning upon crutches (rather a lame way of proceeding) must advance leisurely towards the woodcock, stopping when the bird becomes aware of his approach. When the woodcock moves on he must follow until the bird stops again without raising its head. The fowler must then strike the stick

together very quickly (moult bellement), which will so amuse and absorb the woodcock that its pursuer may take from his girdle a rod, to which a horsehair noose is attached, and throw the latter round its neck, for it is one of the stupidest and most foolish birds that are known." I should think so, if it allowed itself to be caught by this tomfoolery.

Of birds which are not stupid, but knavish rather, even to much theft, Belon relates that the magpie is called Margot (the diminutive of Margaret, as Charles the Ninth called his beautiful sister, the wife of Henry of Navarre); and the jay, Richard, each on account of their cry. Being somewhat skinny, the jay is thought rather a tough morsel by those who desire to dine upon him; but he himself eats everything that comes in his way, and is particularly fond of peas—green peas, perhaps, at a guinea a pound. The common people think that the jay is subject to the falling sickness, nevertheless they eat him when they find him on the ground. It is, perhaps, a weakness in human nature which cannot be remedied, the tendency to make a meal of everything that has animal life. But for this, how severely might we not animadvert on the gluttony of those who, not remembering their song in spring, devour thrushes in the autumn: yet that is the best time to eat them, for they

are then perfectly delicious, as you would see with me, if you had made a diligence-supper thrushes travelling through the Ardennes.

But, I fear, if I read any more of Peter Belon's volume, I shall write an article on gastronomy, a thing I had no notion of when I began. Let me conclude with something more serious than eating —if anything be more serious: let me lament with all the world, that so useful a man as Peter Belon should have been cut off sadly in the prime of his life and full vigour of his intelligence. He was only forty-five years of age when he was murdered one night as he traversed the Bois de Boulogne on his way to Paris; whether for the sake of plunder or revenge is not known.



Facsimile of an old woodcut, 1734.

Witchcraft and Old Hogney.

ABOUT three or four years ago, the public learnt, from some communications which were made to the *Times* newspaper, that a belief in witchcraft still prevailed amongst the rural population of England. This intimation is not altogether a novelty, for the circumstances attendant upon the trial of the poisoner Dove must be fresh in everybody's recollection; and, indeed, very few assizes go by without affording some evidence of the fact. When, however, we find that such a belief is not confined to isolated cases, but is scattered broadcast over a whole district, it be-

comes the duty of all who have the education of the people at heart to lend their aid in endeavouring to extirpate a superstition as ridiculous as it is degrading. Amongst the means to be employed for this object, the least effective may not, perhaps, be those which demonstrate the absurd practices of witchcraft, and tend to show upon what slight and irrelevant grounds accusations of sorcery were preferred.

The ordinances against witchcraft were in full force all over Europe at the commencement of the seventeenth century. There flourished in France, at that date—that is to say, in the year 1601—a person who exercised high judicial authority in the province of Burgundy, whose especial vocation it was, like that of our own Matthew Hopkins, to find out and bring to trial all who were tainted with the crime of sorcery. This gentleman's name was Boguet, and—as he was such a terror to the common people—it is very probable we shall not wrong his fame in supposing that he was the original of the redoubtable Boguey who affrighted our own infancy. It would seem, not only from the revelations of the Sieur Boguet himself, but from the general statistics of witchcraft in France, that he had plenty of work on his hands; for while he was yet a young man, in the reign of Henry the Third, it was estimated that there were not fewer than a hundred thousand sorcerers in different parts of

the country ; as many as thirty thousand having been expelled from Paris alone during the lifetime of Henry's brother, Charles the Ninth, of pious memory. Sorcerers swarmed, in short, in every town, in every village, in every hamlet, until it became a very difficult thing to say who was a sorcerer and who was not. Every accident that happened, no matter how intelligible the cause, was ascribed to the malefic influence of sorcery. A hailstorm that beat down the corn, a river that overflowed its banks, a fire that burnt down a cottage, a murrain that ravaged a farmyard, a casual personal injury or sickness—anything and everything that appertains to the common lot of suffering, was at once ascribed to witchcraft. It was something, the ignorant multitude thought, to avenge the misfortunes by which they were visited on others—a simple accusation sufficed, and legal annals show how successful it generally proved. Under these circumstances, the *Sieur Boguet*, as I have already intimated, found quite enough to do. That he did not eat the bread of idleness is abundantly manifest in the works he published. They are comprised in a thickish octavo volume of some four or five hundred pages, the one I have studied being the Lyons edition of the year 1608 : a rare book, as the family of the *Sieur Boguet* (on whom happily descended the enlightenment of which he was deprived) did their utmost to suppress every copy.

If an author's reputation could be established by a prefatory sonnet—that one-sided criticism which existed when reviews were not—then the *Sieur Boguet's* fame must remain uncontested; for a notable witness to it, one *Chassignet*, declares (in verse of the most execrable description) that *Boguet* is at once “a learned *Orpheus* in the dance of the *Muses*,” “a *Bellerophon* who combats the Prince of Darkness with his pen,” and “a *Hercules*, who by his writings at once cuts off the seven heads of the infernal *Hydra* of sorcery.” But the *Sieur Boguet's* reward was not, as some of his admirers held, of this world only; another worshipper of his genius, *Monsieur Gaspar du Pin*, distinctly puts this question: “If ancient Greece seated *Alcides* amongst the gods for vanquishing the monsters of earth, what place art thou (*O Boguet*) to expect in having conquered Hell?” We shall presently see what are the claims of the erudite *Boguet* to rank with the demigods of antiquity; but first of all we must let him tell the story which furnishes the principal, but not the only theme of his discourse.

It appears, then, that in the year 1598, there dwelt at *Coyrières*,—a village adjacent to *Saint Oyan le Toux* (now called *Ouanne*), and not far from the town of *Saint Sauveur*, in *Burgundy*,—a peasant couple, named *Claude Maillet* and *Humberte du Perchy*. They had three children, the eldest of whom, *Louise*, is the heroine of the

Sieur Boguet. On Saturday, the 15th day of June, in the aforesaid year, Louise Maillet being then eight years of age, was suddenly deprived of the use of her limbs, so that she was obliged to go on all fours, her mouth at the same time being twisted in a very strange manner. This affliction lasted until the 19th of June following, when her parents, believing that the child was "possessed," took her to be exorcised in the church of Saint Sauveur. The ceremony was duly performed, holy water was sprinkled, anathemas were pronounced, and five demons were discovered to have possession of the child's interior, their respective names being Wolf, Cat, Dog, Pretty, and Griffin,—a well-assorted family. This information obtained, Louise Maillet was asked—the next step in all these matters—who had be-devilled her? The innocent child looked round and replied, that it was an old woman, named Françoise Secretain, whom she pointed out amongst those who were standing by to witness the exorcism. The demons, however, though discovered, refused to turn out, and Louise was taken home again. She then begged her parents to pray for her, and while they were doing so, she cried out that two of the devils were dead, and if they would go on, the same thing would happen to the other three. Obedient to the gifted child, the parents prayed all night, but this time without avail, for in the morning Louise was much worse and rocked

about incessantly. Having at last rolled on the ground, the demons came out of her mouth in the form of pellets, as large as the fist (which shows that Louise must have had a swallow nearly as large as that of the Sieur Boguet), and as red as fire, all except the one called Cat, which was black: the two which the child said were dead (I regret to say their names are not given) came up last, and with less violence than the three (on which account I should suppose that they were Dog and Pretty). All these demons (the dead ones included) having made three or four leaps (voltes) round the fire, disappeared, and from that time Louise began to get better.

The next process was that of connecting Françoise Secretain with the child's be-devilment. It was stated by the latter that, on the 14th of June, the day before her possession, the old woman came to the cottage of Humberte Maillet late in the evening, and asked for a night's lodging, but it was at first refused, because Claude Maillet was from home; nevertheless, she yielded to the old woman's importunity. Shortly afterwards, while Humberte had gone out to stable up the cattle, Françoise Secretain drew near Louise and her two younger sisters, who were warming themselves by the fire (in June), and gave the first a crust of bread resembling cowdung, telling her to eat it and say nothing on the subject, or she, Françoise, would kill her and eat her. The child

did as the old woman had commanded, and the next day she was possessed—Wolf, Cat, Dog, Pretty, and Griffin being concealed in the cow-dung. These facts were deposed to by the parents (who neither of them witnessed the transaction), and by Louise (aged eight), “who,” says Boguet, “spoke as well, in giving evidence, as if she had been thirty or forty years of age.”

We have now arrived at the third stage in this history—the incarceration of the alleged witch. Françoise Secretain, as soon as the deposition had been recorded, was clapped into prison. She remained there three days, without being willing to make any confession, declaring that she was innocent of the crime they accused her of, and that they did her great wrong to keep her in confinement. “She affected to be very religious, and told her beads constantly, but,” remarks Boguet, “it was observed that the cross of her chaplet was partly broken, and it was tolerably clear what that signified.” However, she tried to cry, but no tears fell—another bad sign; and putting these things together, it was resolved to confine her more closely, making use of some threats, which is usual in cases of this nature. On the following day, she was pressed to tell the truth (inquisitors and witch-finders were always hunting for that, but never met with it), but it was of no use. Her judges then caused her dress to be changed, and examined her person, to see

if she were not marked (the marks by which a sorceress was recognised were always in the most concealed part of the body; those moles which resembled the print of a horse's foot were looked upon as the most significant). To the surprise of the examiners, no marks were found on the body of Françoise Secretain! But they had not yet done; her head remained for inspection. When she was told that her hair must be cut off, she loosened it of her own accord; but when the operation of shaving began, she showed great emotion and trembled violently. It is probable that she fancied her head might follow her hair; perhaps she was worn out with threats; but in either case that result followed, which, sooner or later in all witch-examinations, was sure to happen—she confessed, “adding to her revelations,” says Boguet, “other things, from day to day.” Her confessions (excluding some which, in all probability, were more particularly suggested by the *Sieur Boguet* himself) went to this extent: “That she had sent five devils into the body of Louise Maillot. That a long time before she had given herself to the Devil, who appeared to her in the shape of a tall black man. That she had been an infinite number of times to the Sabbath of the Sorcerers in the village of Coyrières, at a place called the Combes, near the water, and that she rode there upon a white stick, on which she sat astride. That she had danced at the Sabbath, and beaten

the water in order to make it hail. That she and big Jacques Boguet (an accomplice was never long wanting) had caused the death of Loys Monneret, by means of a piece of bread which they had given him to eat, having previously powdered it with something which the Devil had given them. And, finally, that she had caused the deaths of several cows by touching them with her hands or with a wand, and repeating certain words."

Here was enough, and more than enough, to convict a dozen witches; and, indeed, it unhappily befel that the poor old woman's fears were so wrought upon, that she was brought by degrees to extend her accusations of complicity in witchcraft to a great many others, in addition to her first-mentioned colleague. The whole of these unfortunate creatures suffered the extreme punishment of the law, with the exception of Françoise Secretain herself, who, however, only escaped by committing suicide.

The Sieur Boguet drew up a Sorcerer's Code, divided into ninety-one articles, of which the following is a summary:—The presumption of sorcery suffices for arresting the suspected person. The interrogation of the accused ought immediately to follow the arrest, because the Devil assists sorcerers by his advice while they are in prison. The judge ought carefully to watch the countenance of the prisoner, to see if he fails to shed tears, if he looks on the ground, mutters

aside or blasphemes, all of which are infallible signs of guilt. Shame often causes a sorcerer to deny his crime: therefore, it is good for the judge to examine the prisoner alone, the clerk who takes down the deposition being concealed. If the sorcerer has a companion present who also has gone to the Sabbath, he is always confused. He must be shaved to compel him to speak, and be examined by a surgeon to discover his marks. If the accused does not confess, he must be treated severely in prison and have people about him who know how to extract a confession. Torture ought to be avoided, because it is of no use with a sorcerer; however, if the judge thinks fit he may employ it. It is a fair presumption that the crime of sorcery is hereditary; and it is allowable for the child to accuse the parent. Conflicting evidence is not to tell in favour of the accused, if its general tenor be against him. The punishment of simple sorcery is strangling at the stake before burning: *loups-garoux* (those who change themselves into wolves) must be burnt alive. Those who are condemned on conjectural or presumptive evidence are not to be burnt, but hung.

It is difficult to determine whether cruelty or folly most prevail in this precious Code, which, when it was first published, was received with vast approbation by the bar of which the *Sieur Boguet* was a member: he dedicated it to *Daniel Romanes*, an advocate at *Salins*. And yet there were in

France, at that day, wise and enlightened men, both at the bar and on the judgment-seat.

In the works of the principal demonologists, mention is made of all the appliances in use amongst sorcerers to effect their malefic purposes, together with full accounts of all the ceremonies practised at the Sabbath. The principal personage at this nocturnal revel disliked as much to be mentioned by his real name as he did to appear in his proper person. Thus, instead of calling him Satan, or Beelzebub, *tout court*, the French witches saluted him by the names of Verd-Joli, Joli, Maître Persil (Master Parsley), Joli-Bois, Verdelet, Saute Buisson (Jump-Bush), Martinet, Abrahel, and an infinity of others; "all of which," says the Sieur Boguet, "are agreeable." Fancy Milton's ruined archangel being summoned into court as Master Parsley! The reason why this is so is, we learn from our friend Boguet, because the demons "prefer pleasant-sounding appellations, in order not to frighten the sorcerers by telling them what their real names are." Very considerate of the demons, who, for the same reason, no doubt, preside at the Sabbath generally in the form of an old black goat, an animal sufficiently familiar to the agricultural sorcerer. Delicacy and refinement were not to be expected in this class of persons, and therefore we are not surprised to hear of the dirty tricks with which the Sabbath was inaugurated, nor to learn that

the unguents with which the sorcerers anointed themselves were frequently the most villanous compounds. Sometimes they made use of the fat of new-born children, if birth-strangled so much the better ; at others, of the marrow of malefactors collected at the foot of the gibbet ; of bat's blood, or of the " ruddy drops that visit (the owl's) sad heart," mixed up with the grease of sows, of wolves, or of weasels ; and, occasionally, of ingredients more purely chemical—as preparations of belladonna, of aconite, of parsley (rather personal to Master Parsley, one would think), of poppy, and of hemlock. An especial diet was sometimes adopted, as in the case of Leonora Galigai, the wife of the Marshal d'Ancre, who was accused—the better, they supposed, to qualify herself for her alleged profession—of eating nothing but cocks'-combs and rams' kidneys, having previously charmed the animals that produced them.

Leonora Galigai, wife of the Marshal d'Ancre, was one of those unfortunate persons, only too numerous in the annals of witchcraft, who have acknowledged the crime imputed to them, solely from disgust, terror, and despair. It was declared that she had bewitched Marie de Medicis, and the public belief was confirmed when it was announced that she had in her possession three volumes inscribed with magical characters, five rouleaux of velvet, for the subjugation of the

minds of the great people of the court (how the velvet was to act is not stated), a number of amulets to be worn round the neck, and a letter written by her to a well-known sorceress, named Isabella. At Leonora's trial it was proved that her husband and herself had constructed waxen figures to charm away life; had consulted divers magicians; and that she had caused herself to be exorcised by one Matthieu de Montancy, a noted sorcerer. These things Leonora Galigai confessed to: she was beheaded in Paris, in 1617, and her body was afterwards burnt, her husband, Concini, falling a victim to the fury of the populace. One admission, however, was made by Leonora during her trial, which did not quite agree with the farrago of lies which, in weariness of heart, she consented to utter. When asked by the president, Coustin, by what charm she had contrived to fascinate the queen, she proudly replied, "By that charm which strong minds exercise over weak ones." Like Othello, "that only was the witchcraft she did use." To return, however, to those who were not like Leonora Galigai, political victims, her case having been cited to show that, when all other accusations failed, the charge of sorcery was sure to hit the mark, here is a more special confession, purely on necromantic grounds. It is that of one Abel de la Rue, a young man, visited, says Bodin, the narrator, by the Devil, who came down the chimney, making as

much noise as if it had thundered (as if it had not.)! Satan invited the neophyte to attend the party which he gave that evening. Abel consented, and "Master Parsley" rubbed him under the armpits and on the palms of the hands with a very stinking ointment, and he was forthwith carried away, as it were, by the wind, preceded by a flaming torch, to a place where about sixty persons were assembled, all dressed in black robes, who, on his arrival, immediately began to sweep the ground with besoms (their late nags), and suddenly a large black and most inodorous goat made his appearance, bleating loudly. A ring was then formed, each person facing outwards (a course always adopted that they might not see each other, and afterwards turn delators), and after half-an-hour's dancing, they all fell on their knees and adored the goat as he passed them in review. After this there fell a shower of grain, which smelt like a mixture of sulphur and very stinking carrion (*de la charogne fort puante*), which, being ground into powder, was distributed for malefic purposes amongst the assembled warlocks.

These réunions, to give them a polite designation, were always held in some desolate place, where cross roads met upon a dreary moor, or beside some lonely lake or stagnant pool, such localities being fittest for the manufacture of hailstorms and driving tempests. No grass grew

upon the circle that was formed by the sorcerers' feet, and the soil, say the demonologists, was ever after accursed. The ordinary nights of convocation were Wednesday and Friday, and an inward monitor invariably indicated the hour of meeting. A broomstick, as we all know, was the ordinary mode of conveyance,—a narrow perch, it must be owned, for a flight, miles high, through the air; but sometimes imps, in the disguise of goats and other animals, offered their services. The last was the Italian fashion. In France the broomsticks had the preference, probably because they were more plentiful than goats. On anointing themselves, preparatory to mounting for their ride, the sorceresses repeated several times the word: "Emen-hétan, emen-hétan," which, on the authority of Delancre, signifies, in diabolic language, "Here and there! here and there." After uttering this formula, the ladies flew up the chimney.

Some of these details are universally known; but such as are of rarer practice may be described from the accounts furnished by Delancre, Leloyer, and others, who had an inexhaustible source to draw from—to wit, imagination. These worthies tell us, then, that witches often took to the Sabbath, for various purposes, the children they were in the habit of carrying off. If a sorceress made a promise to present to the devil at the next Sabbath the son or the daughter of some neigh-

bour, and had not been able to fulfil it, she was obliged to offer a child of her own, if she had one. Such children as were agreeable to the Evil One were admitted amongst his subjects after the following manner:—Master Leonard, the great negro, the president of the Sabbath, and the smaller demon, Master Jean Mullin, his lieutenant, were appointed sponsors in the first instance; then a vicarious renunciation of Christianity took place, and the novice was marked in the left eye by one of Leonard's horns. This mark was not effaced until the novice was thought worthy of higher distinction, such as the impression of a toad's foot, the claw of a cat, or the pad of a hare. During their novitiate the children were employed beside the lake, in watching over a flock of toads, with a white stick for a crook; and when they had passed a satisfactory examination they received the second mark, which conferred the brevet rank of sorcerer, and were admitted to the festivities of the Sabbath. It was their custom on their initiation to say, "I have drunk from the tabourin, have eaten of the cymbale, and I am now a professor." Leloyer explains these terms as follows: "By the tabourin is meant the inflated goat-skin which contains the devil's broth; by the cymbale, the cauldron in which the infernal ragouts are cooked." Those children who did not seem likely to turn out useful sorcerers were

condemned to be fricasseed, and were served up in that guise at the Sabbath supper.

On arriving at the place of rendezvous, the sorcerer's first act was to pay homage to Master Leonard. He was seated on a kind of throne in the form of a goat (as Burns says, "in shape o' beast"), having three horns, the middle one of which was tipped with a flame that threw a light over the whole assemblage; sometimes, however, he appeared in the form of a greyhound, of an ox, of the shapeless trunk of a tree with a lowering human head, of a black bird, or of a hideous black or red man,—but his favourite disguise was that of a goat, though he was not particular in adhering to strictly hircine attributes. For instance, he wore a black crown on his head of matted hair, his face was pale and angry, his eyes large, round, and inflamed, his beard goatish, his hands human, except that all the fingers were of the same length, and curved like the talons of a bird of prey; his feet were those of a goose, and his tail was as long as a donkey's; his voice was deep and fearful, without inflection, and he invariably preserved the utmost gravity of countenance. After the ceremony of adoration—which was of a kind that need not be mentioned—Master Leonard distributed among the assistants a few handfuls of money from the Satanic mint,—a species of coin which, after it had passed

through the hands of the sorcerers, always turned into withered leaves. The feast then began. Some sorcerers declare that they were served with napkins of cloth of gold, in vessels of silver holding the most exquisite meats, and in crystal vases filled with the most delicious wines ; others, on the contrary, affirm that the viands were toads, unbaptized children, and the flesh of malefactors cut down from the gibbet ; and that the Devil's bread was always made of black millet. The most abominable songs were sung at these repasts, and when the banquet was over they danced around with a dead cat swinging behind each person. The sorcerers glorified themselves also on account of the mischief they had done since their last meeting, and the toads, who always played a conspicuous part at the Sabbath, preferred accusations against such of their mistresses as had treated them ill or had not given them enough to eat. Those who were condemned to be punished were thrown into a blazing fire by a number of little devils without arms, and kept there till they were half roasted. The toads, who were the witches' familiars, wore dresses of red or black velvet, with a small bell round the neck, or attached to one of the feet. The Sabbath lasted till cockcrow, and then, shrieking, they all disappeared.

Such were the low, despicable, rabid dreams of the miserable wretches who took upon themselves the reputation of witches, either for the purpose of


indulging in some malevolent feeling or of holding sway over those who exceeded them in ignorance as they exceeded them in worldly goods. Steeped in the lowest depths of poverty, they lived upon the fears of their fellow-creatures, and accepted, with little hesitation, the fate which they knew was inevitable.

The crime of sorcery was not, however, attributed only to the poor. Cupidity, envy, and political motives were oftentimes at work to bring down the learned, the wealthy, and the noble. Few men of science during the Middle Ages were free from the accusation of dealing with the powers of darkness. How well this has been illustrated, Mr. Morley's "Life of Cornelius Agrippa" has recently shown—and the list might be extended *ad infinitum*. Not to mention historical names, I shall confine myself to one or two examples given by Boden in his "Demonomanie." He there describes how one of the Counts of Aspremont used to receive great numbers of guests, whom he entertained in the most magnificent manner, and when they took their departure from his castle, they invariably died of hunger and thirst before they reached their own homes. A sorcerer of this kind was a certain Count of Maçon, who, being seated in the midst of his guests, was suddenly called away from the table by a stranger, and, going down into the courtyard, found there a black horse ready

saddled, on which he mounted, and, riding away, was never more seen.

. Another notable sorcerer of rank was the Abbot of Saint Jean d'Angely, a native of Dauphiné, Jourdain Faure by name, who was accused of having poisoned Charles of France, the brother of King Louis the Eleventh, and the beautiful Countess of Montsoreau, by giving to each the half of a peach, which he had prepared. He was imprisoned in the castle of Nantes, and to escape the torture, acknowledged himself guilty of the murder, and of sorcery into the bargain. During his imprisonment the gaoler intimated to the judges before whom the abbot was tried, that it was impossible for him to retain his office on account of the number of hideous demons who came to see his prisoner and made night terrible by their terrific cries and furious orgies. But these visitations ceased immediately after the abbot had been condemned; on that night a dreadful tempest affrighted the city of Nantes; and on the following morning the prisoner was found dead in his cell, his body swollen to twice its natural size, his tongue torn out of his mouth, and his face as black as a coal. Why the abbot was privately strangled does not appear. The act was of course ascribed to the Devil.

So it happened, during the reign of Henry the Fourth of France, to a quack in Paris, named Cæsar, who professed himself skilled in astrology,



necromancy, chiromancy, physic, the art of divination, and many other occult acquirements. He also sold talismans, extracted teeth without pain, and, to those who were more than commonly curious, exhibited the Devil himself with horns, hoofs, and maleficent tail. He carried on his trade until the year 1611, when it was currently reported in Paris that he and another sorcerer had been strangled by the fiend. The details of how it came to pass were published in a small pamphlet, and great faith was attached to the narration, for Dr. Cæsar and his friend were never seen again. But the public forgot that there was a prison called the Bastile, out of which no necromancy could deliver those whom the State had once shut up.

Amongst the number of those who had no objection to the designation of sorcerer, Jacques Raollet, a native of Maumusson, near Nantes, deserves honourable mention. He was a lycanthrope, and if the account be true which Rickius gives, he must have looked something like one: he says that when Raollet was captured—very probably by the aid of dogs—his hair floated over his shoulders like a mane, his eyes were buried in his head, his brows knit, his nails excessively long, and he smelt so disagreeably that nobody liked to go near him. Raollet was condemned to death by the parliament of Angers; and during his examination he asked a gentleman who was present

if he did not remember once to have discharged his arquebuss at three wolves? The gentleman, who was a noted sportsman, readily admitted that he might have done so, upon which Raollet declared that he was one of those wolves, and if they had not been put to flight by the peppering they received on that occasion, they should have devoured a woman who was working in the field hard by. While the mania for confession was on him, Raollet added that it had been a frequent custom with him to devour lawyers and bailiffs, and people of that sort, but their flesh was so tough he could never digest it. Surely some compensation ought to have been made to Raollet after this avowal, but the Angevine parliament only recompensed him with the stake and faggot.

Akin to the self-elected witches were the impostors who declared themselves to be possessed by devils: the race is not extinct at the present day, only their practice assumes a milder form. Amongst the most celebrated of these convulsionnaires was Martha Brossier, the daughter of a carpet-weaver of Romorantin, who, in the year 1569, being then twenty-two years of age, gave out that the Evil One had entered her body. She went from town to town, speaking Hebrew, Greek, Latin, and English, before people who did not understand those languages, but—what was more intelligible to them—she also cut some very remarkable capers, suspending herself in the air four

feet above the ground. The official of Orleans who entertained doubts of the young lady's honesty, informed her that he should exorcise the demon, and straightway began to conjugate some Latin verbs, on hearing which she threw herself on the ground, making the most violent contortions. She was then conducted before M. Miron, the Bishop of Angers, who had her placed with some persons in whom he could confide. Unknown to her they put holy water into her drink, but it produced no effect; they then presented her with some plain water in a *bénitier*, and Martha, believing it to have been blessed, went through her customary grimaces. The bishop, then, with Virgil in his hand, pretended to exorcise her, and opening upon the demon with "*Arma virumque cano*," the convulsions were redoubled. Satisfied, in consequence, that Mademoiselle Brossier was an impostor, the bishop turned her out of the city, and she proceeded to Paris, where for a time she divided the opinions of the medical world as to her actual condition. Finally, however, they declared that Martha exhibited very few signs of disease, a great many of fraud, and that the Devil had nothing to do with the matter (*nihil a dæmone, multa ficta, a morbo pauca*). The parliament of Paris took up the affair, sent Martha back again to Romorantin, and prohibited her from leaving her father's house under pain of corporal punishment. She managed, notwith-

standing, to get away again, and tried to take in the Bishop of Vermont ; but being unsuccessful in the attempt, she fled to Rome, where she was shut up in a convent, and there the history of the possession ended.

Let me add to this account of the self-deluded, the cruel, the ignorant, and the designing, the brief history of a man who, happening to be somewhat more ingenious than his neighbours, was involved in a charge of sorcery through which he lost his life. This person was named Allix, a native of Aix, in Provence, where he lived about the middle of the seventeenth century. He was a skilful musician, and having a great turn for mechanical contrivances, invented a skeleton figure, which, by means of some concealed mechanism, played upon a guitar. This instrument was tuned in unison with one on which he played himself, and the figure was then set at an open window, and the skeleton and Monsieur Allix used to perform duets together, in the fine calm summer evenings. The people of Aix marvelled at first, and then trembled. Monsieur Allix was denounced for witchcraft. In spite of all his attempts at explanation, his judges refused to believe that the automaton performed by mechanism alone, and sentenced him to be hanged and burnt, together with his skeleton accomplice, in the public market-place of Aix. This sentence was carried into effect in the year 1664—the

year in which Newton projected the Binomial Theorem.

Jean Brioché, no less skilful in the manufacture of automata than Allix, was more fortunate than he, though he was within an ace of undergoing the same punishment. Brioché was a dentist who, about the year 1650, became famous for the ingenuity with which he constructed puppets. After amusing Paris and the provinces, which he traversed on his way into Switzerland, he stopped at the town of Soleure, where he gave a representation in the presence of a large number of persons, who had not the slightest idea of what they were going to see: the newly-invented Marionettes being at that time quite unknown on that side of the Jura. But the honest, stupid Swiss had scarcely set eyes on Pantaloon, Pierrot, the Devil, the Doctor, and the rest of their fantastic companions, than they began to feel afraid. Never in their lives had they heard tell of creatures so small, so active, or so talkative as these, and they came to the conclusion that they could be nothing but a family of imps under the orders of Brioché. The report circulated through the room, and one or two of the most orthodox posted off to a magistrate and denounced the poor dentist as a magician. The judge, affrighted, sent his archers to arrest the sorcerer. Brioché was pinioned and brought before a full conclave of magistrates, with his puppets and their theatre. The

evidence was conclusive, and Brioché and his property were condemned to be burnt together. The sentence was on the point of being executed, when one Dumont, a captain of the Swiss guards in the service of Louis the Fourteenth, having heard of what was about to befall a French wizard, was curious to see him before his execution. He immediately recognised the man who had given him so much amusement in Paris, and hurrying to the magistrates caused them to suspend the sentence they had pronounced for four-and-twenty hours, during which he took the trouble to exhibit the Marionettes in open day, and fully explain the mystery of their construction.

To appreciate the extent to which absurdity has reached when sorcery has been in question, read the following extract from the Chronicle of Basle :

“ In the month of August, in the year 1474, a cock of this city was accused and convicted of the crime of laying eggs, and was condemned to be burnt with one of his eggs in the Kublenberg, or public square, where the ceremony took place in the presence of a vast concourse of spectators.”

That the owner of the unfortunate bird should not have shared his fate, is one of those marvels which sorcery alone can explain.

All these frightful absurdities occurred out of our own island. But we have not the least ground for boasting. It is easily shown that we, in the same times, were as ignorant, gross, and cruel.

Crabs.

DISCUSSED as a dainty, except in the West Indies, crabs do *not* hold the first place among the crustaceans, though, even in Europe, they have properties which, rightly handled, are well worthy of gastronomic attention. But before I consider them in that light—that is to say, before I sup—I wish to speak of their moral and personal attributes; which, to my thinking, are far more interesting than those of lobsters.

The Macrourian, as the Lobster is scientifically called, is, in a psychological point of view, noticeable chiefly for his very spiteful temper and his exceedingly quarrelsome disposition. If inter-marriages ever take place between the different branches of the crustacean family, I pity the creature that finds a husband, or a wife, in a lobster; a worse neighbour it is not possible for any shellfish to meet with.

Now the Crab, take him for all in all, is by no means a bad sort of fellow, though he has his peculiarities. To a certain extent, he also is

pugnacious ; but, unlike the lobster, his pugnacity is not wholesale and indiscriminate. When a crab fights, it is always on a personal question : to resent an insult or to defend himself from assault. "The Börs-krabbe" (purse-crab), says Rumphius, "is a native of Amboyna, where it lives in the fissures of the rocks by day, and seeks its food by night on the beach. When met in the road, he sets himself up in a threatening attitude, and then retreats backwards, making a great snapping with his pincers." Rochefort says the same of the crabs in the West Indies : "When you try to catch them, they retreat sideways, show their teeth, and display their open pincers, striking them against each other." This is not the portraiture of a crab seeking a quarrel ; it exhibits, on the contrary, a character in which caution and courage are combined : if you thrust a quarrel upon him, he will do his devoir crabfully : and, when he falls, it will be like a warrior, "with his back to the field and his feet to the foe." Perhaps you will tell me he is a duellist, and quote Aristotle and Pliny to prove it. I know that both these naturalists assert that crabs are in the habit of fighting like rams. Aristotle says so in the eighth book of his "History of Animals" (and Pliny repeats the observation) : "They will fight with one another, and then yee shall see them jurre and butt with their horns like rammes." But it must be borne in mind that the mere fact

of being engaged in a fair stand-up fight is no proof of a quarrelsome disposition. Who can tell what may have been the amount of provocation that had led to this hostile demonstration? There may have been a lady in the case; which, considering that crabs are arrayed, like knights-errant, always in full panoply, is not by any means improbable. There is abundant evidence that the crab is benevolent, patient, long-suffering. Its powers of endurance are prodigious. Sir Charles Lyell tells us, in his "Principles of Geology," that, in the year 1832, a large female crab (*cancer pagurus*) was captured on the English coast covered with oysters, and smaller sea parasites, some of six years' growth. Two were four inches long and three inches and a half broad. Mr. Robert Brown saw the animal alive, in excellent health and spirits; and Mr. Broderip, who so usefully combined the naturalist with the police magistrate, possessed it dead. He decided that this patient *pagurus* could not have cast its shell during the period of the venerable oyster's residence upon it, but must have retained it for six years, instead of moulting it annually, which is, according to some authorities, the habit of the species. The fable of the Old Man of the Mountain becomes tame and pointless after this reality. The wise shellfish cheerfully endured what could not be cured with a resignation and fortitude worthy of a crab

of old Sparta. Indeed, wisdom, foresight, and cunning are characteristics of the species; and in them it places more dependence than in physical force. That very Börs-krabbe which we have already mentioned offers a proof of this. Hear Rumphius again: "The natives of Amboyna relate that they [the crabs] climb the cocoa-nut trees to get at the milk which is in the fruit;" hence, he says, "the common name they bear is that of the crab of the cocoa-nut." Pontoppidan, the learned Bishop of Bergen, also asserts that the crabs in Norway "have an artifice in throwing a stone between the shells of the oyster when open, so that it cannot shut, and by that means seizing it as a prey." Acts like these denote a subtle intellect; indeed, the crab's career affords strong evidence of his being generally under the influence of an *arrière pensée*.

Take the hermit-crab (*pagurus niger*) as an example. Pliny says—I quote the delightfully quaint translation of Philemon Holland, which may be found in the British Museum, with Shakespeare's autograph in it, "William Shakspeare his Booke" (folio, London, 1601)—"The least of these crabs is called pinnoteres, and for his smallnesse most subject and exposed to take wrong. But as subtle and craftie he is, as he is little; for his manner is to shrowd and hide himself within the shells of emptie oysters; and even as he

groweth bigger and bigger, to goe into those that be wider." Catesby, in his "Natural History of Florida" (folio, London, 1731-43), speaking of the hermit-crab under the designation of Bernard l'Hermite, his French appellation, says: "When they are assailed in the shell in which they have taken refuge, they thrust forth the larger claw in a defensive posture, and will pinch very hard whatever molests them." This is the same crustacean mentioned by Hughes in his "Natural History of Barbadoes" (folio, London, 1750) as the soldier-crab, assigning for the name a reason which savours very much of the old soldier: "The soldier-crab is amphibious, and is thought to have derived its name from its frequent change of quarters; for its first appearance is in a small periwinkle shell; as it grows too big for this, it looks out for another empty shell, agreeable to its present bulk; soon after it takes up its abode in a large wilk-shell." That crabs know pretty well what they are about, is apparent also from Pliny's general description of them (lib. ix. c. 31): "Crabs delight in soft and delicate places. In winter they seek after the warme or sunshine shore; but when summer is come, they retire into the coole and deepe holes in the shade. All the sort of them take harme and paire by winter: in autumnne and springe they battle and waxe fat; and especially when the moon is at the full;

because that planet is comfortable in the night time, and with her warme light mitigateth the cold of the night."

Crabs, moreover, have a cultivated taste. Their fondness for music is mentioned by several authors, who, however, are silent as to whether they dance to the tunes in which they appear so greatly to delight. Conrad Gesner, in his "Fischbuch" (folio, Franfort-am-Meyn, 1598), tells the following story, which I translate. He is speaking of the *Taschenkrab* (pocket-crab): "The fishermen entice these crabs out of their haunts with sweet songs, knowing how pleasant unto them is music. They carefully conceal themselves, and then begin to pipe with a sweet voice, by which sound these animals are charmed, and go after it out of the sea. The fishermen draw gradually off, the crabs follow, and, when on dry land, are seized and made prisoners." Rondelet, the learned physician of Montpellier, alludes to the pleasure that crabs take in music in his "Histoire des Poissons." He also gives them a character for wisdom, though in his anxiety to establish his position he proves rather too much. The example he selects is *heracliticus cancer*, so called from its being a native of the shores of Pontus, near Heraclea. "The wisdom of this crab is also praised; and it is on this account that it was represented hanging to the collar of the Ephesian Diana, as a sign of wisdom and counsel. Now, its

wisdom consists in this : that, in the spring-time, depriving itself of its shell, and feeling weak and disarmed, it hides itself without attacking anything until it has regained its former hard covering. When the period has arrived for getting rid of its armour, it runs backwards and forwards like a mad creature, seeking for food of all kinds, with which, when its body is more than ordinarily filled, the shell violently bursts open."

I have said enough to show how greatly the sagacity of the crab prevails over that violence which is the leading characteristic of the lobster. If additional proof be wanting of the ferocious nature of the longer-tailed crustacean, it can be found in Gesner's veracious volume, where, on the authority of Olaus Magnus, he gives an engraving of a huge lobster in the act of devouring a man—not simply dining off him, as a crab might do, but literally strangling him in his embraces. To heighten the probability of this tableau the lobster in the engraving is represented about three times the size of the man, round whose head the animal's pincers are wreathed into a sort of harbour, pressing him down into his open mouth. The swimming man (*schwimmenden Mensch*) appears singularly costumed for the enjoyment of natation, being full-dressed, with garters tied in bows at his knees, and wearing an elaborate beard, which resists the power of the water to take it out of curl. Gesner adds that this lobster,

which is like a rhinoceros, is wonderfully beautiful and agreeable to behold!


To return to the less pugnacious crab. To say that he is wholly exemplary is perhaps to assert too much. I fancy, for example, that in the article of forage he does not care to draw the line too closely between *meum* and *tuum*; but then his habits—those with which he was gifted by nature—are predatory, and some allowance must be made on their account. I look upon him as altogether of a better nature than the lobster, as having more character about him, as being, as it were, more a man of the world. He can live anywhere, do anything, eat anything.

If the crab had not something out of the common in him, is it likely that learned astronomers would have placed him so conspicuously in the zodiac? Trace him through all the systems, and he figures prominently in each: whether as the Carcatí of the Hindus, the Saratān of the Arabs and Persians, the Karábos of the Greeks (it was through Juno's interest he got in there, after being crushed by Hercules when he was sent to bite the demigod's great toe in the fight with the Hydra of Lerna), or as the well-known Cancer of the Romans and ourselves. See what a charge is assigned him! A whole tropic to himself, besides the care of the summer solstice, with the sole management of the sun, till that luminary falls into the lap of autumn, and all his shortcomings

—very many in this country, and greater this year than usual—are weighed in the Balance. It is not an ordinary animal that could do all this.

But to re-translate our crab from the skies, and bring him back to earth. Observe of what account he is. There is not a part of the globe of which he is not an esteemed inhabitant. Attempt the North-west Passage, and under the name of *homola spinifrons*, all covered with yellow hairs, like the dwarf in the fairy tale, you meet him in the Arctic regions. Bathe in the Indian seas, and you shall encounter him as *Egeria*—"the nymph-olepsy of some fond despair"—armed with long slender claws, and clambering over the rocks where you have left your clothes. Cast your line in the depths of ocean, and if your hook be baited with the savoury meat which his soul loveth—"radiated animals, and fish of all kinds"—peradventure you shall capture him, now calling himself *gonoplax rhomboides*—a hard angular name, befitting a sharp, active, industrious individual who has his own living to get, and gets it at the expense of somebody else. There are great varieties of the crab family in the Mediterranean : one of the most notable of them is the *calappa granulata*, a species which the Marseilles fishermen have loaded with all sorts of opprobrious and ridiculous names, calling them *migranes*, *coqs de mer*, and *crabes honteux*, though what they have to be ashamed of is more than I can tell. Modest

crabs would be the more appropriate term, for they hide themselves in the clefts of the rocks at a depth of nearly a hundred feet. It is the difficulty of getting at them, I suspect, which makes the Marseillais so spiteful. They are quite worth the trouble of catching, though not easy to get at when caught; for they are about the best protected crabs going, their chelæ and all their other feet being shut in like instruments of Sheffield make. There is the dorippe again, a well-known decapod, haunting the shores of the Adriatic. The inhabitants of Rimini, that once pontifical city, shamefully abuse this crab, calling him *facchino* (blackguard); like Ancient Pistol, "they eat and eke they swear." But the good folks of Rimini ought to have remembered the proverb about throwing stones: the most illustrious family of which their place can boast bearing the sobriquet—given them, perhaps, by the crabs—of *Malatesta* (wrong-head). There is much ingenuity in the way the dorippe bestows his legs: two pairs of them being placed on his back, so that if accident or malevolence—on the part of the people of Rimini—turn him upside down, he can get over the ground quite so well as if nobody had disturbed him. It is a great mistake to suppose that all crabs are awkward. There is, it is true, a Welsh crab, who, in perfect accordance with Cambrian ideas of dignity, styles himself *corytes cassivelaunus*, and is a very stiff-



limbed, long-clawed crustacean : he is awkward enough in all conscience,—his wooden-looking, dollified pincers, tripping him up at every step—and probably making him swear, for his temper, of course, is hot—as he scrambles over the sands at Beaumaris, where he chiefly delights to dwell. But, on the other hand, see how active and sprightly are many of the brachyurous race. There are the grapsoidians, the most timorous of crabs, that run with incredible swiftness. Who has not noticed their wonderful activity when disturbed on the rocks at Ramsgate? They may be, as Mr. Milne-Edwards says, very grotesque in their movements, but at all events they are uncommonly spry. Run after and try to catch one, and then see where you are. In all probability sprawling on your face amid the sea-weed. The scientific name for these dodgers is *carcinus mœnas*, the common shore crab, a designation which, when spoken in English, must be carefully pronounced for fear of accident, though crabs themselves are not very particular as to the haunts which they frequent. The *carcinus mœnas* has one peculiarity which I must mention. Unlike the generality of decapods, they are born with tails; but those they leave behind 'em as they grow older. In Norway this species is called the garnater or duck-crab; and Pontoppidan, who has a large, episcopal faith, says that their greatest danger

arises from the eel, "which twines itself about the creature's claws, and by squeezing itself together (boa-constrictor fashion), breaks them off and sucks them with great eagerness." The gourmand! Spite of his faith, however, the good Bishop of Bergen does not believe, with Pliny or Ovid, that these crabs are at a certain season transformed into scorpions. He says it is not at all probable. If you wish to know what Ovid says on the subject, I refer you to the fifteenth book of his "Metamorphoses," or to the translation made, in 1603, by Arthur Golding, gentleman, who, in rather long-legged verse, thus gives the recipe for making a scorpion:—

"Go pull away the cleas from crabbes that in the sea do breede,
And burye all the rest in mould, and of the same will spring
A scorpion which with writthen tayle will threaten for to sting."

Gesner, in rough German, says the like.

There is a kind of crab which I think the eels aforesaid would fight shy of: this is the Troidkrabber, or prickly crab, sometimes called the Sea-spider, whose embraces might not be so pleasant as those of a smoother sort. These Trolds, like their preternatural namesakes the Dwarfs, have the faculty of prognosticating a sudden change of weather, by rapidly changing colours. A blushing crab must be an example to animals! But before I have done with the Grapsoidians, from whom I have slightly diverged, I

must speak of one or two more. There is the *grapsus pictus*, or *pagurus maculatus*, beautifully mottled with red—before boiling—whose agility surpasses that of all other crabs. To see how nimbly they scale perpendicular heights, or, greater achievement still, scour the faces of rocks that hang horizontally, would excite envy in a house-fly, and perfectly madden that American gentleman who lumbered along with his head downward over the stage of Drury Lane Theatre a few years ago. The *grapsus pictus* has fancies which are anomalous: he can't live in the water, but for the life of him can't keep away from it; he is always getting wet, and sometimes, when he is washed off by a heavier sea than usual, gets drowned into the bargain. The horseman crab—called in Barbadoes, Ben Trotters—belongs to this swiftly-moving race. Their reputation is of old date, for Pliny tells us that in Phœnicia is a kind of crab called *hippæe*, or rather *hippeis* (that is to say, horses or horsemen), which are so swift that it is impossible to overtake them. Of the same agile family are the clubsmen and she-biters, whose claws are of immense size in comparison with their bodies; and the scuttle-crab, which feeds upon moss, and climbs the highest trees to reach its favourite food.

Contrasted with these active citizens are the *dromia hirsutissima*, of Desmarest, and the lazy crab of Hughes. The former, a very hairy fellow,

is indolent in his motions, and lives in spots where the sea is moderately deep, taking everything coolly. His wife is very much given to being in a state of torpor (*engourdissement*). The lazy crab is a very large and beautiful one. The back is generally full of small knobs of a pale scarlet colour, guarded here and there, but especially about the edges of the back shell, with short, sharp prickles. It has two great claws, ten inches long, and when the indented edges of these claws close together, they fall as regularly into their sockets as the opposite sides of a pair of nippers.


The list would be a very long one if I were to stop to enumerate all the crabs that are good-looking; I shall confine myself here to the crabs peintes, or painted crabs of the West Indies: they belong to a class respecting which I shall have more to say by and by. "These crabs," says Rochefort (*"Histoire Naturelle des Antilles,"* quarto, Rotterdam, 1681), "are painted so many colours, which are all so beautiful and vivid, that there is nothing more entertaining than to watch them as they move about under the trees, in the daytime, seeking their food. Some are of a violet hue, stained with black; others of a bright yellow, marked with grey and purple lines, which begin at the throat, and spread over the back; others are striped with red, yellow, and green, and so glistening that they look as if their shells had been newly polished."

It is not to be supposed that a race of animals, which under such various forms are so widely scattered over the globe, should be allowed to finish their career without occupying a place in the Pharmacopœia of the Middle Ages, when remedies for accidents and diseases were sought even in stocks and stones. The crab was held to possess many occult virtues. "Singular good are they," observed one old writer, "against the bytynge and styngynge of serpentes." "The juice of crabs," says Gesner, "mixed with honey, is useful to those who have dropsy." Again: "An ointment made of the ashes of a crab's shell, with honey, cureth the king's evil." Oil, wax, vinegar, and wine are the accompaniments with which the crab-medicine is exhibited. "Steep the flesh of a crab," advises Rondelet, "in barley or pimpernel water; it is good for the bite of a mad dog." Marcellus, another learned Theban of that ilk, recommends a tablespoonful of powder of crabs to be taken with sweet wine, when you desire to raise your spirits: the wine without the powder is, I should imagine, the better recipe. The eyes of crabs have enjoyed a medicinal reputation down to a very late period, and the soldier-crab is still highly esteemed in some of the West India islands for the oil that is in him, which is looked upon as being of great service to lubricate stiff or swollen joints. Some persons recommend the flesh of crabs as an admirable diet for old

people ; but this brings me to the most interesting part of my subject.

To eat your crab is, after all, the best use you can put him to. In what perfection this is accomplished in the West Indies I will endeavour to show, after describing the dainty decapod for which these islands are pre-eminently famous. I need scarcely observe that it is of the land crabs I am about to speak.

This genus has a variety of names. The scientific name is *gecarcinus*, or crab of the earth. Its local appellations are derived from its colour, as the red, the white, the black, and the mulatto, in the English islands ; the French call them *toulouroux*, and *crabes peintes*, or *violettes*. Of all these, the black mountain crab of Jamaica is the most delicious. His habits are thus described by Patrick Browne in his "History of Jamaica" (fol., London, 1756) :—"These creatures are very numerous in some parts of Jamaica, as well as in the neighbouring islands, and on the coast of the continent. They are, in general, of a dark purple colour, but this often varies ; and you frequently find them spotted, or entirely of another hue. They live chiefly on dry land, and at a considerable distance from the sea, which, however, they visit once a year, to wash off their spawn, and afterwards return to the woods and higher lands, where they continue for the remainder of the season ; nor do the young ones ever fail to follow



them as soon as they are able to crawl. The old crabs generally regain their habitations in the mountains, which are seldom within less than a mile, and not often above three miles from the shore, by the latter end of June, and then provide themselves with convenient burrows, in which they pass the greater part of the day, going out only at night to feed. In December and January they begin to be in spawn, and are then very fat and delicate, but continue to grow weaker until the month of May, which is the season for them to wash off their eggs. They begin to move down in February, and are very much abroad in March and April, which seems to be the time for the impregnation of their eggs, but the males about this time begin to lose their flavour, and the richness of their juices. The eggs are discharged from the body through two small round holes situated at the sides, and about the middle of the under shell; these are only large enough to admit one at a time, and as they pass they are entangled in the branched capillaments with which the under side of the apron is copiously supplied, to which they stick by the means of their proper gluten, until the creatures reach the surf, where they wash them all off, and then they begin to return back to the mountains. It is remarkable that the bag or stomach of this creature changes its juices with the state of the body—and while poor is full of a black, bitter, disagreeable fluid, which diminishes

as it fattens, and at length assumes a delicate, rich flavour. About the months of July or August the crabs fatten again, and prepare for mouldering, filling up their burrows with dry grass, leaves, and abundance of other materials. When the proper period comes, each retires to his hole, shuts up the passage, and remains quite inactive till he gets rid of his old shell, and is fully provided with a new one. How long they continue in this state is uncertain; but the shell is observed to burst both at the back and the sides, to give a passage to the body; and it extracts its limbs from all the other parts gradually afterwards. At this time the fish is in the richest state, and covered only with a tender membranous skin, variegated with a multitude of reddish veins; but this hardens gradually after, and becomes soon a perfect shell like the former. It is, however, remarkable that during this change there are some strong concretions formed in the bag, which waste and destroy gradually as the creature forms and perfects a new crust. This crab runs very fast, and always endeavours to get into some hole or crevice on the approach of danger; nor does it wholly depend on its art and swiftness, for while it retreats it keeps both claws expanded, ready to catch the offender if he should come within its reach; and if it succeeds on these occasions, it commonly throws off the claw, which continues to squeeze with incredible force for

nearly a minute after—while he, regardless of the loss, endeavours to make his escape, and to gain a more secure or a more lonely covert, contented to renew his limb with his coat at the ensuing change; nor would it grudge to lose many of the others to preserve the trunk entire, though each comes off with more labour and reluctance as their numbers lessen.”

Crabs may lie under the accusation of walking backwards, but none can say they do so when on the line of march from the mountains to the sea. Then they stop at nothing, but go right over every obstacle they find in their way. They have been known, says Catesby, to enter in at a window, and on a bed, where people who had never before seen any were not a little surprised. On these journeys they feed twice a day, and it is the sort of food they select which makes their flesh delicious. Newly-sprung grass, vegetables, the tendrils of pumpkin vines, and the shoots of the young tobacco, are what they prefer, though sometimes they are less choice, and eat decayed fruit and the berries of the manchaneel apple. When they commit this latter indiscretion they become themselves unwholesome, and should not be eaten, unless great care is taken to wash the fat, as well as the other meat, with lime-juice and water.

Lime-juice is a prominent ingredient in dressing a land crab. But, first of all, you must catch him, which is chiefly done by torchlight. The

modus operandi is simple. Having unearthed your game, move your torch rapidly before his projecting eyes—he is speedily dazzled ; while in his bewilderment, jerk him on his back ; then deftly seize him by two of his hind legs, and throw him into the ready sack. You may cook him at leisure after this fashion :—

Select a fine broad-backed toulourou, in that condition of body when the young skin is of a pinkish hue, tender and delicate as moistened parchment, and the animals themselves bear the name of crabes boursières. What callipash is to turtle, a greenish substance called taumalin, which is lodged under the shell of the back, is to the land crab. Commence your operations by parboiling the decapod ; then take out the taumalin, the fat, and all the meat, and, with the eggs of a fine female crab, mix in a mortar. Then add half a pint of clarified butter, the yolks of six eggs, some parsley and fine herbs, a few heads of pimento, a little orange-peel, and four or five onions cut very fine. Put the whole into a saucepan, and let it simmer gently for an hour, squeezing in, from time to time, the juice of a fresh lime. Garnish with peppers, green or red—bird's-eye or capsicum—and serve in a silver dish. As in the case of lobster, Madeira is the only correct accompaniment.

It would be a mockery to give a receipt for dressing a British marine crab (however jolly)

after this exquisite dish ; though, as the French proverb says, “ Quand on n’a pas ce que l’on aime, il faut se contenter de ce que l’on a.” Or, in other words, when a man has not got what he likes best, he will do well to make himself contented with what he *has* got.

Lobsters.

"LOBSTERS!" There is a wide-mouthed fellow crying them before my door at this moment. How little does he know what lobsters really are! All he thinks of is the profit he shall get if he succeeds in selling a few of the stale, flaccid, water-logged, long-tailed crustaceans that fill his basket. And yet he has the face to call them "Fine Nor—ro—way lob—sters!"

"The remembrance of a good dinner," says a great French gastronome, "atones for twenty fasts." This is mere enthusiasm. The more I recal one good dinner the more I desire to have another. Having breakfasted, lunched, and supped—I had almost said dined—on *hot* lobsters, at Mr. Plumbly's comfortable little inn at Fresh-water, it is no satisfaction to me to think of that happy time when the fellow at my door displays his unsavoury wares. So far from deriving consolation from the remembrance, this rogue's pre-

sent demonstration adds poignancy to my regret, and I exclaim with Dante—

The greatest of all woes
Is to remind us of our happy days
In misery.

I should be guilty of hypocrisy if I were to pretend to care for lobsters on any ground but such as are purely gastronomic. Morally, I look upon lobsters as occupying a very low grade in the scale of animals. They are a kind of marine Muscovites, bristling with rage against every one—fierce, hard, horny, and pugnacious, always tearing and rending something, and losing their limbs with as much indifference as if they belonged to some salt-water Czar. Then, they not only get into rows themselves, but are often the cause (brandy-and-water combining), of other people getting into rows. If you wish for evidence of their pugnacity, look at their claws. One of them is always a great deal smaller than the other. Observe the left claw, with which the lobster (like a human being sparring) wards off the blows aimed at him! Examine the right, or striking claw! That which now garnishes the dexter limb is not the real, original cheliform, but a supplementary pair of pincers, thrown off long ago in some midnight submarine brawl. In case of emergency, your thoroughbred lobster parts with a claw with as little concern as a man tearing the tail of his

coat in a hedge when a mad bull is after him. The late Sir Isaac Coffin, who used to tell a great number of odd stories, was once witness, he said, to a terrific battle between two armies of lobsters in the harbour of Halifax, in Nova Scotia. They fought, he declared, with so much fury, that the seashore was strewn with their claws. Sir Isaac was the admiral on the station, and ever afterwards, when he saw a lobster, he pointed to the disparity between the claws in corroboration of his story. Having mentioned that locality in connexion with lobsters, let me describe how I have assisted in catching them there.

About three miles south of the town of Halifax, on the western side of the harbour, a creek indents the land, which is called the North-west Arm. Owing to its rocky bottom, lobsters resort there in vast numbers, and the shallowness of the water makes the creek a complete preserve, where you are always sure of game. The ordinary trap, a lobster-pot, is not used in Nova Scotia, a far speedier mode of capture being adopted. On a cloudy summer's night, when the tide is at the full, and the lobsters are close in-shore, you put out your boat and coast along in four or five feet water. Each fisherman is armed with a long pole, like a clothes-prop, perfectly straight, with a prong about six inches deep at one extremity. In the bow of the boat is a huge gridiron, upon which a coarse kind of sheathing, called shingle,

commonly employed in the interior of cottage roofing, is set on fire, burning slowly, and giving out a strong red light. It is held firmly over the side, the boat being a good deal tilted towards the shore, and every eye cast downward to penetrate the water. The light in the grating reveals hundreds of lobsters scudding along the rocky floor in their shining black armour. The fisherman carefully inserts his weapon in the water, and continues to lower it till the prong is only a few inches above the back of the lobster he has selected; he then drives the pole down with all his might, and—if he has not been deceived in his aim, in which case his arm is jarred up to the shoulder-blade for his pains—succeeds in irrevocably jamming his prey in the groove, and lifting it into the boat. With a good light, a quick eye, a steady hand, and a little dexterity, a fisherman need seldom miss his mark; and so numerous are the lobsters, that I have seen as many as from forty to fifty caught in this manner in the course of an hour. Indeed, to catch a boat-load in the course of an evening's sport is no uncommon event; and I recollect that one night, being very heavily laden, we got tired of carrying our prize any further, and gave them in charge of a sentry outside the garrison, desiring him to let the captain of the guard know that we had left him a sentry-box full of lobsters for his breakfast. That these delicacies were sufficiently abundant

in that part of the world may be inferred from the fact that the ordinary market price for a good-sized lobster was only a halfpenny currency. Conceive, then, the unutterable dismay of a lobster-lover from Nova Scotia stopping in the Hay-market, London, and mildly inquiring the price of his favourite food. "Oh, sir," replies the shopman, cheerfully, "lobsters is cheap to-day. I can let you have that 'ere splendid feller for three-and-six!" "There was a time," murmurs the Nova Scotian, "when I might have had seven dozen for the money."

Let us suppose our lobster caught, and put to death. Boiling alive seems to be a very cruel process—but is far less cruel than it appears to be. I question, indeed, if there be any cruelty in it. The loss of the precious limbs, so lugubriously deplored, is, as we have seen, scarcely felt by a long-tailed shell-fish. To discover a vital part beneath his horny carapace is a matter of some difficulty, and a knife unskillfully wielded might only wound without killing; whereas suffocation by boiling water is instantaneous death. Don't believe a word of the legend about lobsters screaming in the cauldron: in the first place, they haven't time to scream—in the next, they have no voices. A lobster's scream, a swan's dying song, the pelican's substitute for her offspring's breakfast, the suicide of the scorpion, and the self-cremation of the phoenix, all belong

to *Legendary Natural History*. At all events, if you want to eat a lobster, you must boil him alive—I use the masculine gender advisedly; for a hen lobster is the least worthy. If you suffer him to die a natural death before you consign him to the boiler, what is the consequence? A pale, attenuated creature, having no spring in his tail, with a yielding carapace and listless claws (those claws once so vigorous), and wearing a general sickliness and ghostliness of aspect, presents himself for your supper. Is it worth while wasting the contents of your cruets on such an animal? Common sense at once replies in a brief and stern negative. But if Nature has endowed you with harder attributes and keener perceptions, let your cook (if you are unwilling to run the risk yourself), boldly seize the heaviest and most active of the lot submitted for sacrifice—a fellow with a shell whose blue-blackness rivals the raven's wing—unspotted and unbruised, and plunge him into the bubbling cauldron. The next time you see him how different from his congener who died of neglect in the well-boat. Not a grain of his weight is diminished, the elasticity of his tail is as strong as ever, the grasp of his pincers impossible to unlock, his coat armour like adamant; and for his colour, compound the hues of a Life-guardsman's uniform, a gleam of Vesuvius in eruption, a Tom Thumb geranium, one of Danby's sunsets, a Géant rose in full

bloom, with a spinelle ruby from the cup of Jemsheed—and you may possibly arrive at a feeble imitation of the jovial glow in which, like unto a garment, he is now enwrapped. Now is the time to read Shakspeare after our own commentary, and exclaim, “Fish, fish, how art thou fleshified !”

Like genius, lobsters can never be thoroughly appreciated until after death. Their greatest glory is posthumous. Suppose his claws disjointed and broken—not smashed, as often happens—his body carefully twisted from his tail, and both displayed by the sharp incision of a knife ; suppose the *disjecta membra* symmetrically grouped ; then let him be brought in to be dressed. After what fashion shall this be done ? Shall we tell the cook, when we have gazed our fill as he lies there, like Christabel, in his loveliness, to take him back to the kitchen, release him from his armour, chop him fine, his liver and all that is edible within him, incorporate him with egg and crumbs, and roll him up into balls with a seasoning of salt, mace, and cayenne pepper, which, when fried a delicate brown, shall qualify him to appear as a dish of rissoles ? Shall we have him minced and boiled up with Madeira, vinegar, grated nutmeg, salt and pepper, and deluged with melted butter cunningly flavoured with anchovy and yolks of eggs, in which condition he shall bear the name of a buttered lobster ? Shall

we stew him after the Irish fashion, or curry him in the Anglo-Indian manner, or scollop him, or distribute him in patties, or prepare him as an omelette in the artful manner now practised in the kitchen of the Trafalgar, at Greenwich?

We might order any of these things to be done, and out of every trial the lobster would emerge triumphant; yet we should not have eaten our lobster properly. "I know what you mean," says the stand-up supper-eater or scrambling picnic caterer; "you recommend him in a salad; a lobster salad, you know, and champagne and chat—that's the way!" Not *in* a salad, I gravely reply. As much salad *with* him as you please; but if you want the salad to be tough, and the lobster tasteless, mix them together; if not, keep them apart, and let one serve as a relish to the other. For my own part, I can do without any of the adjuncts quoted by the stand-up supper-eater. I admire a salad by itself—champagne should be drunk in the whirl of gay society—and chat is for the cosy tête-à-tête anywhere; but nothing in my opinion ought to interfere between man and lobster, save and except a few glasses of East India Madeira. My method is this: I take the whole of my tail and mince it finely; and scoop out all my liver—if I am left to deal with a fine hen, I do not, of course, neglect the coral—and combine; gently, not with spoon, but with finger and thumb, I strew a little salt; two drops of

vinegar; a light shower of cayenne, enough to tinge the general surface; and two—or three, if you like—large table-spoonfuls of the finest oglio di Nizza (provided you can get it: if not, oil from Lucca or Florence). I now mix for five minutes, and do not follow Gay's recommendation about the cucumber—at least, I hope not—for I sit down quietly, and, with a silent friend, eat what I have prepared, moistening occasionally with Madeira, and reserving the claws for conversation.

Eating a lobster in this way, I look at his empty shell, and say with Malcolm, that “nothing in his life became him like the leaving it.” This may appear ungrateful; but as I said before, I cannot praise my lobster morally. What right had he, merely to gratify his own pugnacious propensities, to deprive me of the pleasure of eating two large claws instead of one? Compare his conduct with that of the crawfish—a member of his own family—during the process of moult, or, as it is learnedly termed, ecdysis! The struggles which that animal makes to render itself fitter for the table are really sublime: its sole anxiety being to leave nothing behind, its wretchedness of mind at casual dismemberment can scarcely be conceived. “At this period,” says a distinguished naturalist, “the crawfish (*Astacus fluviatilis*) becomes very restless, the symptoms of inquietude increasing in proportion as the time for emanci-

pation draws nigh. It rubs one of its legs against the other, and finally throws itself on its back. In that situation it begins to shake and swell itself out, till it tears the membrane which connects the carapace with the abdomen, and begins to raise the former : then it rests awhile. Alterations of agitation and rest succeed each other at intervals of longer or shorter duration," &c. What other reason can there be for all this restlessness, this inquietude, this violent internal struggle, but the consciousness that, unless he turns himself out a complete crawfish, he is of no estimation in the eyes of cooks? It is this perfection of form, this heroic struggle to become good, that makes your Belgian crawfish worth his twenty francs in the Brussels market. I am not alluding, of course, to those miserable little creatures, which only serve for garnish, but to animals some two feet in length (feelers included) that are to be found in aqueous haunts bordering the river Meuse, in the neighbourhood of Dinant, Philippeville, and Florence.

These crawfish are worthy specimens of their race, and how delectable they are to the palate let those declare, who, like myself, have fed on them at the restaurant of Du Bas, the younger, in the aforementioned city of Brussels. He advises you—and I think he is right—to aid their deglutition by a flask of Rhine wine ; but a something called " Schnapps," which has juniper for its basis, is no

unpleasing succedaneum. Take, however, whatever you fancy most. In the absence of the aforesaid "Schnapps"—which, I may as well say, is good "Hollands"—you cannot go wrong, in liquidating your account with crawfish, by swallowing a glass of Cognac.

The Apparition of Monsieur Bodry.

I.

ONE hundred years ago, there lived in Paris, in the Rue Saint Martin, a rich silk-merchant named Gombert. He was about sixty years of age, a widower, with an only child, a beautiful girl of nineteen, who was no less admired for her personal attractions than for the handsome fortune which she was likely one day to inherit. Madeleine Gombert was, indeed, the great match of the quarter in which the silk-merchant dwelt, and if she did not marry, it was not certainly for want of suitors. A hundred years ago the reign of the Encyclopedists had begun, their doctrines had penetrated far and wide, and religion was going out of fashion ; but a stranger accidentally dropping into the church of Saint Merri, on a Sunday morning, would have concluded, from the number of young men who knelt at mass and sat out the sermon, that devotion had—at all events—lost no ground in that quarter of the city. He would, however, have been wrong ; the cause of

this crowd of devotees arising simply from the fact, that Saint Merri was the parish church of Monsieur Gombert and his daughter, and that to see and, possibly, attract the notice of the beautiful Madeleine, had a great deal more to do with their attendance than the sincerity of their faith or their admiration for the preacher. Whether Madeleine Gombert were aware, or not, of the sensation which her presence excited I will not pretend to say: the chances are, that feminine instinct set her right on this point, though it did not influence her conduct. As for Monsieur Gombert, he was as far as possible from putting a right construction on this peculiar demonstration: to doubt was not his habit. He accepted everything literally, and believed religiously in all he saw.

Of course, it was never intended by nature or custom, by Madeleine Gombert or her father, that the possessor of so much beauty and the heiress of so much wealth should go to the grave unwed. Her marriage had, in fact, been a thing decided on, after the usual French mode of that time—where there was anything to marry for—while she was yet a child. The business of the silk-merchant of the Rue Saint Martin had thrown him in very close relations with a rich manufacturer of the city of Lyons, of the name of Bodry. As the connexion increased, the desire arose on each side to cement it by the union of the two families.

Monsieur Bodry had an only son, Monsieur Gombert an only daughter. Could anything be more natural than a compact between two capitalists, the terms of which should be, that Monsieur Bodry's son should marry Monsieur Gombert's daughter?

Although the proposed marriage of Henri Bodry and Madeleine Gombert was an arrangement of ten years' standing between their parents, which needed no consent on the part of the contracting parties, still, with the view of making them acquainted, Monsieur Bodry one fine morning consented to the request of his son, that he might go to Paris to see his betrothed, a few months before he came of age, on which occasion the nuptials were to take place. The young man felt, without doubt, a certain degree of curiosity respecting the person who was destined to be his partner for life; but—if the truth must be told—he was, though of feeble constitution and uncertain health, extremely fond of pleasure. Then, as now, Paris was the focus of enjoyment, and to have his full swing of the capital before he settled down for good was the thing of all others which the young Lyonnese most ardently desired. Supplied, then, with a full purse and the letter of introduction to Monsieur Gombert, which constituted his sole credentials, Henri Bodry set out from his native city, about the latter end of November, in the year 1757.

A hundred years ago, the journey from Lyons to Paris was an affair of time. Ordinary travellers usually went by roulage, and consumed nearly twenty days on the road; but the wealthier middle classes aspired to the coche, a lumbering carriage without springs, nearly as heavy and almost as slow as the public wagon, but infinitely more genteel. As the roulie did not comport with the dignity of Henri Bodry, he took the coche. In those days of rare intercourse between places separated by any great distance, it seldom happened that the traveller, who was going all the way, met with a companion similarly intentioned. For the most part, people descended at intermediate towns, where others supplied their places; but it not unfrequently chanced that a dreary blank with no new faces intervened, creating that worst of all sensations a Frenchman can experience, the intolerable *ennui* of having nobody to talk to.

Henri Bodry's prospect at starting was of the latter cheerless character; for, after passing Trevoux, he found himself the sole occupant of the coche, and this irksome solitude lasted until he reached the ancient city of Mâcon. The coche, as soon as it was dark, put up for the night at the auberge called the "Cross of Burgundy," and in a large room, containing four beds—the usual complement at that time—Henri was left to sup and sleep, and make it out how he might until eight

o'clock on the following morning, when the vehicle would be once more in motion.

With a long November evening before him, the prospect was not a pleasant one; but while he was waiting for his promised supper, a stranger entered the apartment, dressed as if for a journey, and carrying a small valise in his hand. He was a young man, apparently about the same age as Bodry, good-looking, and of a cheerful, pleasant countenance. After bestowing a glance on the occupant of the chamber, the stranger looked about him, as if to see which bed was unoccupied, and then took possession of one of them by throwing his cloak, hat, and valise upon it. This act of appropriation performed, he approached the table where Bodry sat, and, without any preamble, asked him if he was travelling, and which way he was going. With the frankness of his age, Henri at once told him his destination, at which the new-comer expressed great satisfaction, he being also bound for Paris, and, as freely as he had inquired, went on to say, that he had come some distance across the country, was very cold and hungry, and if Monsieur had not already eaten his supper, would be most happy in being permitted to share that meal with him. Bodry was delighted to have a companion so agreeable, and acquiesced in the proposal most readily; the supper was soon served, and over a

bottle of Moulin à Vent, the wine for which Mâcon is still so famous, the young men rapidly made acquaintance. At twenty years of age, there are no reserves; Bodry entered in to his own affairs without the slightest concealment, described his position, stated the object of his journey, and fairly acknowledged, in reply to a laughing question from the other, that he had no great vocation for his impending marriage.

In return for this confession, the stranger said, his name also was Henri—Henri Blaireau, the son of an avocat at Bourg-en-Bresse; that he was not over-burthened with money, but hoped to acquire it by following his father's profession, after he had studied enough law at the college in the Rue St. Jean de Beauvais. As to the law itself, it was not his choice; he would rather have spent a fortune than be at the trouble of making one; but what would you have?

The intimacy which thus sprung up between the travellers was not diminished by the time they reached Paris. On the contrary, it had grown into a strong friendship. Their habits and tastes were so closely allied, that what the one proposed the other was sure to agree to.

Amongst the subjects which engaged them during the latter part of their journey was the question where they should lodge on their arrival in the capital. Bodry knew nothing of Paris, and therefore made no objection to the Quartier Latin

when it was proposed by Blaireau ; so they went to the "Ecu d'Argent," in the Rue des Carmes—an auberge which the latter had heard his father praise when slightly in his cups, as being the only place in Paris for drinking Vin de Beaune. It was not a fashionable part of the town, but the college was near, and the residence of Monsieur Gombert not remote.

Notwithstanding this proximity, it seemed that neither love nor law was meant to be the first consideration with Messieurs Bodry and Blaireau. Together they saw the Marionettes on the Boulevard du Temple ; together they went to dance at the gardens of the Colisée ; together they dined at the "Moulin de Javelle," the most celebrated of all the extra-mural taverns of Paris ; together they went everywhere, in short, except to the College of Law and the Church of Saint Merri.

One evening, when they were returning home, an accident led them through the Rue Saint Martin, and a qualm of conscience came over Bodry when he remembered that he had been already three weeks in the capital without delivering his letter of introduction or making any inquiries after Monsieur Gombert and Mademoiselle Madeleine. A qualm of conscience sometimes arises from a physical cause. Henri Bodry was a little out of sorts, and proposed—like a certain gentleman when he fell sick—to do something extraordinary by way of amendment. When he reached the

"Ecu d'Argent," however, he felt so much worse that he went directly to bed; in the course of the night he was seized with a violent fever, and, though it in some degree abated on the following morning, he remained very ill. Nothing could exceed the kindness and attention of Henri Blaireau. He sat by his friend's bedside all night, ministered to all his wants, soothed him by his care, and encouraged him by his conversation.

Bodry's discourse turned chiefly on what was uppermost in his mind at the moment of his seizure; and his desire to make the long-neglected visit was increased by a letter which arrived from Lyons, asking him many questions respecting the silk-merchant's family. But it was in vain he strove to rise; the fever still held him in thrall; yet, in the perversity of his malady, he persisted in declaring that the visit must immediately be paid. Henri Blaireau urged that Monsieur Gombert was not aware of his being in Paris, with various other arguments, and concluded by saying, that if his friend desired it, he would go to the Rue Saint Martin and explain the circumstances of the case.

This last suggestion operated singularly on the mind of the feverish invalid. Yes! Blaireau should go as he proposed; but he must not say a word about his illness, he must present himself as the real Bodry—keep Blaireau entirely out of sight—and by and by, when he was able to appear

in person, they might make merry over the joke and laugh it entirely away. Blaireau combated this proposition at first; but finding that his objections only increased his friend's nervous irritability, he consented.

His task was not a difficult one, for Monsieur Gombert knew very little of his correspondent's domestic affairs, and nothing personally of his future son-in-law. The worthy silk-merchant embraced his visitor with all the effusion which the approaching connexion seemed to warrant, and met with a demonstration no less cordial. It was in Monsieur Gombert's counting-house that the greeting took place, but, the greeting over, the scene was changed to an inner apartment, where Madeleine with her *bonne*, who had nursed her from her cradle, was occupied with her embroidery. A feeling almost akin to envy was Blaireau's first sensation on seeing the beautiful girl to whom Bodry was betrothed; but it lasted only a moment, being quickly superseded by the pleasure he experienced in looking at, and conversing with her. At the end of a couple of hours he found himself head over ears in love. On the other hand, the impression which he appeared to have made on Monsieur Gombert and his daughter, and on the old nurse, who had a voice in everything, was all he could have desired, provided always that he had been Henri Bodry, and not his temporary substitute.

Unwillingly, at last, he rose to take his departure, and lingered as he pressed the hand of Madeleine Gombert, which was not, he fancied, too suddenly withdrawn; neither did the expression of her countenance convey the idea that he would not be welcome when he renewed his visit. All this was consistent enough with the relation in which Henri Bodry stood towards the family Gombert; but, somehow or other, Blaireau could not divest himself of the notion—which ninety-nine Frenchman out of a hundred would have entertained—that no small share of the reception accorded to him was a tribute to his own personal qualities.

On his return to the Rue des Carmes, he found Henri Bodry much worse. A physician was sent for; Blaireau was unremitting in his attention, but the fever increased alarmingly, and as evening drew on, he began to fear for his friend's life. At Bodry's request, Blaireau related to him all the particulars of the interview in the Rue Saint Martin, and the subject still engrossed the mind of the sick young man, to the exclusion of every other. Even when conscious of his own danger, he still continued the theme.

"I have often been ill," he said, "but never felt before as I do now. Should I die, Henri Blaireau, promise me here, that you will still be Henri Bodry. Think what a desolation it would be to Monsieur Gombert and Madeleine to be

told of my death! Marry her for my sake; then I shall feel that I have done my duty in giving her the husband she expected. No, no, I am not light-headed,—I know very well what I say. Unless you promise this, I cannot die content.”

Blaireau felt convinced that his friend's mind was wandering, but to keep him quiet, he again promised all that was required. For half-an-hour Bodry remained silent, and his anxious attendant believed he slept; but suddenly he rose up in bed, and a distressing change was apparent; his breathing came short and thick, his voice was faint and low, the hand of death was evidently upon him. Grasping Blaireau's arm convulsively, as if striving to draw him closer, he feebly whispered the word “Remember!” and then fell back dead.

II.

It was ten o'clock at night, and Monsieur Gombert was alone in his counting-house. Everything was silent in the apartment but the ticking of one of those large clocks, white-faced, blue-figured, and highly bedizened with gilding, which we call of the age of Louis Quatorze, though they belong to the time of his great-grandson. That clock had just struck ten, and the last stroke had hardly ceased to vibrate when Monsieur Gombert, who happened to raise his head, became aware of some one who was stand-

ing near the door. He had not heard anybody enter, perhaps because he had been absorbed in his accounts, and his astonishment—not unmixed with fear, for he was of a nervous and timid nature—was very great.

“Who is there?” he asked with hesitation. “Is that—you—Jacques?”

Jacques was Monsieur Gombert’s confidential clerk; but no Jacques replied, and the silk-merchant remained speechless, with his eyes still fixed on the figure, which now slowly advanced a few steps, and, as it seemed to him, without noise. As the figure drew nearer, though the light from his solitary candle was very dim, Monsieur Gombert perceived a pale, hollow face, which wore an expression of great anxiety; the eyes were wide open and glittered exceedingly, and a quantity of dark hair streamed wildly. Monsieur Gombert gasped for utterance, but it was denied him. The appearance came nearer still, and then Monsieur Gombert imagined—but doubted, notwithstanding—that he recognised features he had lately seen. This supposition gave him a glimmer of courage.

“My friend,” he said, “what brings you here at this hour?”

“Death!” answered the figure, in a deep, sepulchral voice.

“How! Death! Has any misfortune arrived?”

“The greatest that can happen to man. Henri

Bodry died an hour ago. I come to invite you to his funeral."

"You! you! But you are Henri Bodry!"

"I was—this morning!"

"Ah! mon Dieu!" exclaimed the merchant, and fell senseless from his stool.

At his outcry and the noise he made in falling, Madeleine and old Petronille, the *bonne*, who were at work in the next room, rushed into the counting-house. They supposed Monsieur Gombert was in a fit, and hastily applied such remedies as they could devise. After a few minutes the silk merchant opened his eyes.

"Where is he?" he said, looking round with horror.

"Who, sir?" asked Madeleine. "What do you mean?"

"Who?" he repeated slowly, again looking round him. "Who? Henri Bodry. He was here this moment."

"Impossible! sir," said Petronille. "You were alone when we came, which we did on the instant you called out. There was not the shadow of a person in the room."

"The shadow!" returned Monsieur Gombert. "Ah, that is it. The shadow. It was no living being."

"I beseech you, my father," said Madeleine, "to tell us what is the matter. You look ill and frightened."

"I have reason to be so," replied Monsieur Gombert. "I have seen a spirit."

He then, as collectedly as he could, related what had occurred.

"This is a fancy," said Madeleine. Monsieur Gombert shook his head.

"A dream," observed Petronille. "You supped well on that famous goose of Alençon—you had more than one glass of Burgundy, in honour of Monsieur Bodry"—the silk-merchant shivered—"over your books after supper, a wrong time, you became sleepy—an indigestion arrived—there!"

Ingenious reasoning, but not satisfactory to Monsieur Gombert.

"I saw him," he persisted, "as distinctly as I see either of you. It was the face of a dead man. He invited me to his funeral."

These words and the earnestness with which Monsieur Gombert spoke infected Madeleine and Petronille with some of his own fear: they also looked timidly about them, dreading to behold some hideous apparition.

Mademoiselle Gombert was the first to regain her presence of mind.

"Let somebody be sent at once to ask news of him."

This suggestion was immediately adopted. Jacques, the confidential clerk, who lived in the house with the rest, was thought the most proper

person to employ; and without being made aware of the motive which had led to his errand, was directed to ask if Monsieur Henri Bodry could come and see Monsieur Gombert directly. In less than half an hour he returned, with a countenance much discomposed.

"Sir," said he, to Monsieur Gombert, "I bring you very sad tidings. The young gentleman who came here only this morning so full of life and spirits died about an hour ago!"

Madeleine Gombert was thunderstruck. She could scarcely believe her ears. But it was more than astonishment. There was a pang at her heart. That fine, handsome young man, who had so much interested her!

Monsieur Gombert felt very ill, and went at once to bed. Old Petronille and his daughter kept watch beside him with as many candles burning as there were candlesticks in the house to hold them; and, further to scare away all evil spirits, Madeleine read aloud the Office des Morts, Monsieur Gombert joining fervently at the end of every psalm with the anthem, "Heu mihi!"

So much affected, indeed, was the honest silk merchant by the sudden death of his correspondent's son, that he did not get the better of the shock for several days. To attend Henri Bodry's funeral was entirely out of the question; and the knowledge that it had taken place while he was

confined to his room, materially contributed to his recovery.

"Once fairly underground," thought Monsieur Gombert, "he is not so likely to pay me another visit, unless—unless"—and this doubt harassed him sorely, "unless he is vexed at my not having complied with his wishes."

As for Madeleine, poor girl, she talked over the sad event with old Petronille: it was the only consolation she could find for the loss of her lover. She also sought comfort in devotion, and instead of going now and then when the day was fine, went regularly morning and evening to mass in the church of Saint Merri.

III.

In the meanwhile Henri Blaireau had paid the last offices to his friend in the Cemetery of the Innocents—at that time the place of burial for half the people of Paris—and had written an account of his untimely death to the elder Bodry at Lyons, informing him that all his son's effects were under seal. These pious duties performed, he directed his thoughts to what concerned himself. But he found the study of the law much more distasteful to him now than it had even been before. In vain he pored over Pandects and dived into Digests; nothing came of it; one object always kept floating between his eyes and the page, which neutralized all his toil; and that

object was the smiling face of Madeleine Gombert.

"How unfortunate," he constantly reflected, "that I should have presented myself in the name of another man! She had never seen Henri Bodry—not even friendship subsisted between them: her regret, if she feels any, must all be on my account, and I—unhappy wretch that I am!—I have made myself my own rival! If Monsieur Gombert had accepted the invitation to the funeral, I could then have explained my poor friend's caprice, but to attempt to do so now would expose me to I know not what odious accusations."

This hourly Jeremiad made him, of course, much less of a lawyer and much more of a lover than ever, and it always ended in his throwing aside his books and wandering forth to the Rue Saint Martin.

One rainy evening, weary of pacing up and down the dark, damp street without any reward, he stood up for shelter in the porch of Saint Merri. The vesper service was going on, and, thinking the inside of the church more comfortable than the out, Henri Blaireau pushed open the little baize door and entered. The interior was nearly as obscure as the street he had left, for Saint Merri is a large church, and was very dimly lighted. The congregation, as thin as it generally is at vespers on a raw, foggy, wet

winter's evening, seemed to consist of only a few women, and Henri roamed undisturbed through the aisles, thinking, as usual, of Madeleine Gombert. He had twice crossed the small lateral chapel which stands on the south side of the building without noticing that any one was there; but the third time he passed, his attention was attracted by a female figure kneeling before an altar dedicated to the Virgin. Something besides curiosity prompted him to stop and gaze. He did more than stop; he drew nearer, placing himself discreetly behind a massive pillar, the better to obtain a view of her face. For some time she remained absorbed in prayer. At length she raised her head, and the lamp above the image of Our Lady shedding its rays full on the worshipper, revealed to him the features of Madeleine Gombert. He uttered an exclamation of surprise, at which Madeleine looked round in the direction from whence the sound proceeded; but she soon withdrew them, unable, apparently, to penetrate the gloom. Once more she prayed, and Henri felt an almost irresistible longing to cast himself on his knees before the same altar and pray there too. But the fear of disturbing her made him pause, and while he hesitated she rose. She did not perceive that she was not alone in the chapel, and came up to the spot where he stood. He put out his hand and caught her by the sleeve. She turned quickly, and lighted by the altar lamp, be-

held, close to her, the countenance of the man for the repose of whose soul she had just been praying. The sight was enough to startle the strongest nerves. "Heaven! Monsieur Henri!" she cried. "Save me, Mother of Grace!" and as fast as her feet could carry her she rushed to the chancel door.

To run after her was Henri Blaireau's first impulse; but he had not gone three yards before he tripped over an old woman who was fast asleep (at her prayers) in the aisle, and came down on the pavement with a crash. In the midst of a furious scolding, Blaireau picked himself up as well as he could; and then remembering for the first time what was due to the proprieties of a church, desisted from further pursuit. To quiet the old woman, whose occupation (besides praying) was the letting of rush-bottomed chairs to the pious, he gave her all the sous he had in his pocket, and then stole away on tip-toe, thinking himself lucky in not having drawn on his head the fulmination of the officiating priest. Once outside, he quickened his steps; but all his haste was vain: he only arrived within sight of Monsieur Gombert's door to see the skirt of Madeleine's garment disappear as the portal was closed.

Could he not find a lodging in the Rue St. Martin—could he not find a lodging in the very house where Monsieur Gombert dwelt?

He resolved to return next day and see about

it. Fortune might be more propitious the next time he encountered the beautiful Madeleine; at all events, he would enjoy the melancholy pleasure—this is the way a lover always puts it—of seeing the object of his affections, even if he were himself unseen.

Mademoiselle Gombert said nothing to her father about her fright in the church of St. Merri, but she made a confidante of Petronille. The old *bonne* crossed herself on hearing the fearful tale, and asked a great many questions. In what form did the apparition present itself—did it wear a shroud—was it very pale—did it speak—had it a smell of sulphur? All that Madeleine could say in reply was, that the spirit appeared to her to be dressed in the usual male costume, and looked exactly like Monsieur Henri Bodry.

IV.

The next morning, in order the better to execute his project unobserved, Henri Blaireau set off to the Rue de la Grande Friperie, where he bought, at one of the numerous second-hand shops in that useful quarter, a three-cornered military hat and a long, grey dragoon cloak—which last, though it had seen at least twenty years' service, was declared by the conscientious merchant who sold it to be better than new. Wrapping himself closely in his dragoon's costume, he then pro-

ceeded to the Rue Saint Martin, and carefully reconnoitred Monsieur Gombert's house once more. Daylight enabled him to discover what had been hidden by the darkness of night—the very thing he desired: on one of the door-posts of the open gateway was an écriteau announcing that a “garni,” or furnished room, was to be let, application to be made to the concierge. It was not on the ground floor, for these were the silk merchant's warerooms; neither was it on the first floor (the house had no entresol), for there were located Monsieur Gombert and his family; neither was it on the third floor—but without stopping at every landing-place, let us climb at once to the top of the staircase, open the door of a chamber, familiarly termed a mansard or garret, and there we have the *joli appartement, bien meublé*, as the concierge poetically described it. What furnished it well, consisted of a truckle-bed without hangings, two rickety chairs, and a still more rickety table; what made it handsome was, perhaps, the flooring of red tiles which, in spite of their colour, did not make the room look warm. It was, in short, a wretched hole, and Henri Blaireau shivered as he cast his eyes round it; but then he was under the same roof with the maid he loved, and that reconciled him, of course, to its wretchedness. He returned to the “Ecu d'Argent,” settled his account, and loading an Auvergnat with his own and his deceased friend's trunks—a

weight which the strongest mule might well have refused to carry—finally installed himself in his delectable abode.

But there was one obstacle to complete concealment which no precaution could overcome. If there be any particular spot on the face of the globe where gossip holds its head-quarters, it is in a Paris porter's lodge, and this was equally the fact in the reign of Louis the Fifteenth as it is in the reign of Napoleon the Third. The occupants of the lodge at Monsieur Gombert's were Pierre and Phrosine, an elderly couple, whose surname was Le Pocheux : the former had been for many years a soldier, the latter everything in the menial line, and their marriage had been as much an *affaire de convenance* as if his father had called himself De Rohan and hers De Montmorency. Gossip was the staple of their intellectual existence, and though there did not appear to be much food for it in so simple a circumstance as the hiring of a garret at ten livres a quarter, yet the military externals of the new lodger had fixed the attention of Monsieur Pierre, whose scrutiny inclined him to think that the dress and its wearer did not altogether correspond : so much baggage, too, was incompatible with the condition of a person who took up his lodging under the eaves ; and, finally, Madame Phrosine had taken particular notice of very white hands, very bright eyes, and a very handsome face, as far as the cocked hat

and the cape of the cloak allowed them to be visible.

The greatest ally of Monsieur and Madame Le Pocheux was, naturally, Madame Petronille (they never failed to salute each other with the prefix which I have adopted), and to her they imparted the news of the stranger's arrival, accompanied by their own enlightened commentaries. Gossip is the mother of a great many children, and her eldest-born is Curiosity. The old *bonne* became curious about the mysterious dragoon, and it was not long before her curiosity was shared by Mademoiselle Gombert. To have a peep at him, on the first opportunity, was Petronille's expressed intention.

For the first hour or two after he was established in his new quarters, Henri Blaireau found occupation enough in trying to make it look more habitable; but when this process was at an end, and he found that, stretch his neck as he might from his solitary window (which only overlooked a courtyard), he could see nothing of the apartment in which Mademoiselle Gombert resided, he began to get very impatient of confinement, and yearned to approach her more nearly. But to leave his room in broad daylight would be to court unnecessary observation, so he waited till it was dusk before he issued from his den. Then, wearing the attire on which he counted for disguise, in the event of his meeting Monsieur Gom-

bert, he slowly descended the staircase, lingering at every step as he drew near the first floor. He had arrived at the last turning when he observed some one standing in the doorway of Monsieur Gombert's suite of rooms. There was just light enough for him to see that it was a woman; his heart at once told him who it was,—and clearing the flight at a bound, he stood before her. She did not alter her position, but remained behind the shadow of the door. He was encouraged to speak, and after the ceremonious fashion of his time and nation, took off his hat as he did so; scarcely had he uttered a word, before a violent scream saluted him, the door was slammed in his face, and he heard the cry of "Murder!" vociferated within, in the shrillest of female tones.

He rushed downstairs; and, the *porte cochère* being not yet closed, reached the street without detention.

Petronille—for she it was who had been lying in ambush—continued to exercise her lungs, as she floundered on the parquet, without daring to lift her head, until she brought round her the whole of Monsieur Gombert's household, with the exception of Madeleine, who, more piously disposed than ever, had gone again to vesper service in the church of Saint Merri.

"But what is the matter, my poor Petronille?" said Monsieur Gombert, as they raised the old woman, and conducted her into an inner room.

"Oh, sir! sir!" she replied, with hysterical effort; "I have seen him—I—myself!"

"Seen whom, Petronille?" asked the silk merchant, tremulously.

"Fresh from the grave, in his winding-sheet,—with eyes like burning charcoal!"

Monsieur Gombert groaned instinctively, and did not repeat his question; Jacques, the clerk, Marie, the cook, and Felicité, the fille-de-chambre, were, however, clamorous to hear all.

"But tell us, Petronille, for the love of Heaven!"

"One, two, three,—as slowly as the clock strikes, I heard him descending the staircase, just as I was holding the door in my hand, after letting out Mademoiselle, when she went to vespers. How can I tell why I waited to see who might be coming? These things are fate! Suddenly, before I knew what had happened, he stood within a yard of me. I might have touched him. Then I saw his face! The face of the young gentleman from Lyons, who died last week at the "Ecu d'Argent," in the Rue des Carmes. The face of Monsieur Bodry!"

Monsieur Gombert dropped into a chair, unable to utter a word; consternation was depicted on every countenance, and a loud knocking was heard at the outer door.

Everybody (Monsieur Gombert only excepted) screamed again; and Pierre, the concierge, came

in, amazed, removing from his head a little skull-cap made of carpet.

"Monsieur Pierre," shrieked Petronille, "I have seen a ghost!"

"Bah!" replied Pierre, "I've seen five thousand. A ghost and a dead man are much the same thing, I imagine. When one sleeps on the field of battle, one sees plenty of ghosts."

"Ah, but they don't walk, Pierre, those dead people," replied Petronille.

"Very odd, if they did," said Pierre, "when their legs are shot away."

The obstinacy of the old soldier did more to recover Petronille than even his corporeal presence, and with as much emphasis, but more circumstance, she repeated her adventure. Still Pierre shook his head.

"But Monsieur Gombert," continued the *bonne*, "has been visited by the same ghost. It is the ghost of a young man! He came to him an hour after his death. And what will you say, when I tell you,—my duty now compels me to reveal it,—that Mademoiselle Gombert, in her turn, has seen the spirit? No later than yesterday evening it appeared to her in the church of Saint Merri. On that account, she has gone again to-night, to consult Monsieur le Curé.

"What is that you say?" cried Monsieur Gombert. "Oh, my good friend Pierre, run to the church and bid her return instantly! Also,

ask Monsieur le Curé to come as soon as the service is over."

The concierge no longer presumed openly to deny what was affirmed on so much higher authority, but he obeyed Monsieur Gombert's orders, and set off at once.

V.

When Henri Blaireau got into the street, he was at a loss what to do next. One set of inclinations prompted him to go and get some dinner; another set of inclinations—loftier, nobler, altogether more becoming a lover—led him to follow the route which Mademoiselle Gombert had just taken.

Accordingly, he also bent his footsteps to the church of Saint Merri. Arrived there, he made no pause in the porch, lingered not an instant in the nave, took no heed of priests or old women, but plunging into the south aisle, steered his way softly through the labyrinth of piled-up chairs, till he came to the chapel of the Virgin. What was his delight, as he cautiously peeped from behind the pillar where he had stood the evening before, when, in the same attitude and in front of the same altar, he beheld Mademoiselle Gombert!

Experience had taught him wisdom. His unlucky features, he resolved, should not get him

into a scrape again. He advanced, therefore, at a quick step, covered his face with both hands, took advantage of a devotee's privilege by plumping himself on his knees beside Madeleine, and bending down his head, began to pray with great fervour.

Though such an association in worship was not so uncommon as to be remarkable, Mademoiselle Gombert felt a little uncomfortable at the close proximity of the stranger.

"Beate mater," murmured the new suppliant, "et intacta virgo, gloriosa regina mundi, intercede pro nobis ad——" he paused for a moment or two, and then, turning towards Mademoiselle Gombert, substituted for the right word, "Magdalenam;" and before she could recover from her astonishment, he added :

"Forgive me, Mademoiselle; but in me you behold the person who, last night, unhappily caused you trouble."

Madeleine rose hastily to her feet, and moved from the chapel; but she was overtaken by Henri Blaireau before she had gone many steps.

"Can it be?" she said, faintly. "Do the dead return to this world?"

"Not the dead," said Henri, seizing her hand; "not the dead, but the living."

Madeleine's senses could not resist the fact of a human hand being clasped in hers,—a hand

warm as her own. The voice, too, that breathed in her ear had no sepulchral tone.

"If not the dead, who and what are you? The face I saw was that of Henri Bodry."

"Mademoiselle, forgive a deception which was not premeditated,—nay, was almost involuntary. Henri Bodry is, indeed, no more; but I am not Henri Bodry. O, you will pardon me, Mademoiselle Gombert, when you have heard my story."

There was something so persuasive in his manner, that Madeleine was induced to listen. He was not a good common lawyer, but he was an excellent special pleader. Is it necessary, then, to add that his suit was not unprosperous?

"There is," said a rough but cheery sort of voice close behind them—the voice of Pierre the old concierge, carpet-cap in hand, and on the broad grin—"I don't know what to do at home, ma'msell'. Madame Petronille has been in fits, and everybody is distracted at having seen a ghost. I'm afraid," he added, turning to Henri, "I'm afraid it was yours, Monsieur."

The stir at Monsieur Gombert's house had scarcely subsided when Madeleine entered.

"Father!" she cried, running into his arms, "I grieve for your distress—for poor Petronille's—but there is one behind me (do not be alarmed at a mere personal resemblance) who can explain all."

About a quarter of an hour afterwards, the curé of Saint Merri was announced.

Monsieur Gombert went with a smiling air to meet him.

"I don't know," he said, "what you will think of my dilemma. I sent for your spiritual aid; but instead of an exorcism, I think I will, upon the whole, ask you to have the kindness to bestow a blessing!"

THE END.

Popular and Interesting Books,

JUST PUBLISHED,

By JOHN CAMDEN HOTTEN,

151, PICCADILLY, LONDON, W.

NEW CHRISTMAS BOOK BY DUDLEY COSTELLO.

Now ready, pp. 336, handsomely printed, cloth extra, price 3s. 6d.,

Holidays with Hobgoblins; or Talk

OF STRANGE THINGS. By DUDLEY COSTELLO. WITH HUMOROUS ENGRAVINGS BY GEORGE CRUIKSHANK.

Amongst the chapters may be enumerated:—

Shaving a Ghost.
Superstitions and Traditions.
Monsters.
The Ghost of Pit Pond.
The Watcher of the Dead.
The Haunted House near Hampstead.
Dragons, Griffins, and Salamanders.

Alchemy and Gunpowder.
Mother Shipton.
Bird History.
Witchcraft and Old Bogyey.
Crabs.
Lobsters.
The Apparition of Monsieur Bodry.

Beautifully printed by Whittingham, fcap. 8vo, price 4s. 6d.,

A GARLAND OF

Christmas Carols, Ancient and Modern;

including several never before given in any collection.

. This Garland comprises those delightful Carols that for generations have charmed the good people of our country at the festive season. They have been collected from every source that would afford materials, including rare old broadsides, ballad-sheets, chap-books, and the various other kinds of street literature. None have been included but what were genuine, and no modern adaptations or imitations are given. Several of the Legendary Carols possess all the delightful characteristics of our most admired old ballads.

Now ready, in small 4to, half morocco, very neat, price 7s. 6d.,

AN HITHERTO UNKNOWN POEM, WRITTEN BY JOHN BUNYAN, whilst confined in Bedford Jail, for the Support of his Family, entitled,

Profitable Meditations, Fitted to Man's

DIFFERENT CONDITION: in a Conference between Christ and a Sinner. By JOHN BUNYAN, Servant to the Lord Jesus Christ.

This very interesting literary memorial of the Author of the celebrated *Pilgrim's Progress*, has been choicely reprinted by Whittingham, from the only known copy lately discovered by the publisher. It has been edited, with an Introduction, by George Offor, Esq. The impression is limited.

"A highly interesting memorial of the great allegorist."—*Athenæum*

A LITERARY AND PHILOLOGICAL CURIOSITY.

Now ready, choicely printed by Whittingham, in small 4to., half morocco, top gilt, Roxburghe style, price 5s.,

The Book of Vagabonds and Beggars;

With a VOCABULARY OF THEIR LANGUAGE. Edited by MARTIN LUTHER in the Year 1528. Now first translated into English, with Introduction and Notes, by JOHN CAMDEN HOTTEN.

. The original of this very curious work is comparatively unknown. From its pages the singular books on Vagabonds and their tricks, published in this country in Shakspeare's time, were in a great measure derived. Many will be surprised to learn that "Card Sharpers," "Wise Men," "Begging Letter-Writers," "Shabby-Genteels," "Travelling-Tinkers," "Shivering-Jemmies," and other descriptions of rogues to be met with in our streets, are not excrecences of modern civilisation, and that more than three centuries ago the Great Reformer edited a little book about them, setting forth their manœuvres and the vulgar language which they had adopted.

"As curious a book as we have seen for a long time."—*Literary Gazette*.

"A book worthy of being edited by Luther."—*Chronicle*.

"The lovers of curious literature have need to be grateful to Mr. John Camden Hotten for this translation."—*Critic*.

"Sheds much light on many of the allusions of the poets and dramatists of the 16th century."—*Leader*.

"Mr. Hotten deserves much credit for producing this handsome quarto."—*Athenæum*.

AN EXTRAORDINARY BOOK.

Beautifully printed, thick 8vo., new half Morocco, Roxburghe style, 12s. 6d.

Contes Drolatiques (Droll Tales col-

LECTED FROM THE ABBEYS OF LORRAINE). By BALZAC. WITH FOUR HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FIVE MARVELLOUS, EXTRAVAGANT, AND FANTASTIC WOODCUTS BY GUSTAVE DORE.

. The most singular designs ever attempted by any artist. This book is a fund of amusement. So crammed is it with pictures that even the *Contes* are adorned with thirty-three illustrations. Now the reader is made to smile at the mishaps of some fat monks; then a battle scene, with fighting men jammed in inextricable confusion until the picture becomes painful to look at, occupies his attention; next, some portraits of fellows who would pass for Pluto's firemen, all seared, as though they had been for a thousand years stirring molten lava; then knights making love, and kissing through their visors; then dreamy old German cities, with diablerie, or satanella, going on right and left—but all so quaint, so wonderful, that the beholder confesses he never looked upon the like before.

New Issue, in 4 thick vols., fcp. 8vo, cloth neat, 14s., of the
Comic Almanack, from 1835 to 1853,

Complete:—containing HUMOROUS POETRY, TALES, WHIMS, ODDITIES, &c., by THACKERAY, TOM HOOD, ALBERT SMITH, and the Best Wits of the Age, with nearly ONE THOUSAND ILLUSTRATIONS, by the Inimitable GEORGE CRUIKSHANK, and other artists.

. The good things in this fund of humour deserve to be widely known. Here THACKERAY's well-known *Fatal Boots* and other tales occur, with numerous Illustrations by Cruikshank, which are not to be found in his works, or anywhere else. The original price, as stated, was £27s. 6d. Copies are now offered, for a short time, at 14s., and as but few sets will be completed, early application is necessary.

NEW WORK BY THE LATE DOUGLAS JERROLD.

Now ready, price 10s. 6d., in One handsome 8vo vol.,

The Brownrigg Papers. By Douglas

JERROLD. Edited by his Son, BLANCHARD JERROLD. Coloured Illustration by GEORGE CRUIKSHANK.

. Containing some of the most characteristic pieces from the pen of the master-wit, now first collected. "Henry Brownrigg" was the favourite *nom-de-plume* of the author.

"What has long been wanted."—*Times*.

Now ready, SECOND EDITION, beautifully printed, Fcap. 8vo, pp. 316,
cloth extra, 4s. 6d.,

A Dictionary of Modern Slang, Cant,

and VULGAR WORDS, used at the present day in the Streets of London, the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge; the Houses of Parliament, the Dens of St. Giles; and the Palaces of St. James: preceded by HISTORY OF CANT AND VULGAR LANGUAGE from the time of Henry VIII., showing its connection with the GIPSEY TONGUE; with GLOSSARIES OF TWO SECRET LANGUAGES, spoken by the Wandering Tribes of London, the Costermongers, and the Patterers. BY A LONDON ANTIQUARY. Fcp. 8vo. extra cloth. WITH A CURIOUS WOODCUT, "A Cadger's Map of a Beggar's District," and Explanation of THE HIEROGLYPHICS USED BY VAGABONDS.

"Rabble-charming words, which carry so much wild-fire wrapt up in them."
—*SOUTH*.

33 The SECOND EDITION, entirely re-written, with more than two THOUSAND additional words, and a mass of fresh information not included in the first issue.

This interesting work is an important contribution to popular philology, as it chronicles for the first time nearly FIVE THOUSAND WORDS used by persons of every denomination in common conversation, MOST OF WHICH ARE CONTAINED IN NO ENGLISH DICTIONARY whatever. The origin of many cant and slang words is also traced.

JOHN CAMDEN HOTTEN'S LIST.

Second Edition, beautifully printed, 12mo, cloth, 3s. 6d.,

THE CHOICEST HUMOROUS POETRY OF THE AGE.

The Biglow Papers. By James Russell

LOWELL. (Alluded to by John Bright in the House of Commons.)

WITH COLOURED ILLUSTRATIONS BY GEORGE CRUIKSHANK.

"* This Edition has been Edited with additional Notes explanatory of the persons and subjects mentioned therein.

"The rhymes are as startling and felicitous as any in 'Hudibras.' 'Sam Slick' is a mere pretender in comparison."—*Blackwood's Magazine*.

"The fun of the 'Biglow Papers' is quite equal to the fun of the 'Ingoldsby Legends.' This is the real doggerel, the Rabelaisque of poetry."—*Fraser*.

There is an edition of this work extant, hastily got up after my own was announced, edited by Mr. Hughes, the author of *Tom Brown's School Days*. It gives an introduction, long and occasionally amusing, but of not the least value in explaining to the English reader the peculiarities of the work. The *Globe* pointed out this sad defect in reviewing the present edition:—"The copy beside us," remarks the writer, "is apparently edited and published by Mr. Hotten, who gives a preface—which has the rare merit of explaining exactly what the ordinary English reader requires to know of satirical political poems, written in the Yankee dialect, touching the Mexican war, and the extension of the slave states—and of attempting to explain nothing else."—*Globe*, Dec. 8, 1859.

Now ready, SECOND EDITION, fcap. 8vo, neatly printed, price 1s.,

Macaulay; the Historian, Statesman,

and ESSAYIST: Anecdotes of his Life and Literary Labours, with some Account of his Early and Unknown Writings.

* Also, a fine paper Edition, cloth, neat, with a PHOTOGRAPHIC PORTRAIT (the only one known to have been taken) by MAULL and POLYBLANK, price 2s. 6d.

Includes Anecdotes of SYDNEY SMITH, MOORE, ROGERS, and LORD JEFFREY; and gives numerous examples of Lord Macaulay's extraordinary memory and great powers of conversation.

Now ready, NEW AND POPULAR EDITION, neatly printed, fcap. 8vo, pp. 336, price 2s. 6d.,

Anecdotes of the Green Room and

STAGE: or, Leaves from an Actor's Note-Book, at Home and Abroad. By GEORGE VANDENHOFF.

Mr. Vandenhoff, who earned for himself, both in the Old and New Worlds, the title of THE CLASSIC ACTOR, has retired from the Stage. His Reminiscences are extremely interesting, and include Original Anecdotes of the Keans (father and son), the two Kembles, Macready, Cooke, Liston, Farren, Elliston, Braham and his Sons, Phelps, Buckstone, Webster, Chas. Mathews: Siddons, Vestris, Helen Faucit, Mrs. Nisbett, Miss Cushman, Miss O'Neil, Mrs. Glover, Mrs. Chas. Kean, Rachel, Ristori, and many other dramatic celebrities.

JOHN CAMDEN HOTTEN'S LIST.

In a few days, neatly printed, price 1s. 6d.,

Health and Excitement; or, the In-

fluence of Mental Cultivation upon Health. By Dr. BRIGHAM. Edited with additional Notes, by Dr. ARTHUR LEARED.

This is a highly important little book, showing how far we may educate the mind without injuring the body. A chapter, full of interest, is given on the education of scientific and literary men, the excitement they live in, their health, and the age they generally attain.

Now ready, post 8vo, cloth, 3s. 6d.,

Rubbing the Gilt Off: a West-end Book

for all Readers. By JOHN HOLLINGSHEAD, Author of "Under Bow Bells, a City Book for All Readers."

WITH A HUMOROUS ILLUSTRATION.

CONTENTS.

The Humiliation of Fogmoor.
A Pet of the Law.
Navy Dry Rot.
How to Make a Madman.
Nine Kings.
An Official Scarecrow.
A Model Theatre.

The Suffering Sinecurist.
A National Christmas Bill.
The Social Reformer.
Mudfog on Colonies.
Diplomatic World.
The Man behind my Chair.
Wanted, a Court Guide.

Now ready, fcap. 8vo., cloth, price 3s. 6d., beautifully printed.

Gog and Magog; or, the History of the

Guildhall Giants. With some Account of the Giants which Guard English and Continental Cities. By F. W. FAIRHOLT, F.S.A.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS ON WOOD BY THE AUTHOR, COLOURED AND PLAIN.

. The critiques which have appeared upon this amusing little work have been uniformly favourable. The *Athenæum* pronounces it a perfect model of successful antiquarian exposition, readable from the first line to the last. The *Art Journal* devotes a considerable space to the little work, and congratulates the author upon his success. The *Leader* contributes two full columns of eulogy. The *Builder* directs its readers to purchase it. The *Critic* says, in a long article, that it thoroughly explains who these old Giants were, the position they occupied in popular mythology, the origin of their names, and a score of other matters all of much interest in throwing a light upon fabulous portions of our history.

Now ready, in 8vo, 4s., blue cloth and gold,

Photographic Pleasures: Popularly

Pourtrayed with Pen and Pencil. By CUTHBERT BEDE, B.A., Author of "Verdant Green," &c.

WITH SEVENTY HUMOROUS DESIGNS BY THE AUTHOR.

"The ludicrous side of Photography is fair game for the caricaturist. With much cleverness Mr. Bede has seized the salient points of the new art."—*Athenæum*.

"The work is full of illustrations, radiant with the raciness of Cruikshank, the broad and round humour of Rowlandson, knowledge of the world of Doyle, and quick apprehension of Leech."—*Herald*.

JOHN CAMDEN HOTTEN'S LIST.

Nearly ready, beautifully printed, on fine paper, fcap. 8vo, pp. 350, price 5s.

The History of Playing Cards, and the

VARIOUS GAMES connected with them, from the Earliest Ages; with some Account of Card Conjuring, and Old-Fashioned Tricks.

ILLUSTRATED WITH SIXTY CURIOUS WOODCUTS ON TINTED PAPER.

This most amusing work, introducing the reader to a curious chapter of our social history, gives an interesting account, replete with anecdotes, of the most popular and widely known pastime which has ever been invented by man for his amusement. A more instructive and entertaining book could not be taken in hand for a pleasant hour's reading.

Two Vols, royal 8vo, handsomely printed, £2 8s.

Ancient Songs, Ballads, and Dance

TUNES of the Olden Time, illustrative of the National Music of England, with Introductions to the different Reigns, and Notices of the Airs from Writers of the Sixteenth Century; also a Short Account of the Minstrels, by W. CHAPPELL, F.S.A.

This interesting work forms the largest and most complete collection of Ancient British Ballads and Songs ever published. The words are from the original old copies, and the addition of the Old Tunes to which they were formerly sung is an interesting and most curious feature. Several facsimiles adorn the work.

Preparing for publication, fcap. 8vo, beautifully printed,

Old English Ballads, relating to New

England, the Plantations, and other Parts of North America; with Ancient Poetical Squibs on the Puritans and the Quakers who emigrated there; now first collected from the original excessively rare Broad-sides sold in the streets at the time, and edited with Explanatory Notes. *Illustrated with facsimiles of the very singular woodcuts which adorn the original Songs and Ballads.*

Preparing for publication, beautifully printed, post 8vo, half morocco, Roxburghe style,

Garland of Pepysian Ballads, Historical,

ROMANTIC, and HUMOROUS, some illustrating Shakespere, edited by EDWARD F. RIMBAULT, Esq., LL.D.

It is well known that the unfortunate regulation imposed by Pepys, the celebrated diarist, that his Manuscripts and Books should never be examined save in the presence of a Fellow of the College at Cambridge where they are preserved, has hitherto alone prevented the collecting and publishing some of the more interesting of these world-renowned Ballads and Songs. The difficulty, however, has been surmounted by Dr. Rimbault, aided by the authorities of Magdalene College; and the lovers of our charming old popular poetry will be glad to know that a *Garland* of these Balladian ditties is in course of publication. The work will be preceded by an Introduction on Ballad Lore, Ballad Writers, and Ballad Printers, giving some new and interesting particulars gathered from "old bookes," and other sources, hitherto unexplored. The publisher would state that the work will be beautifully printed by Whittingham, and that it will be adorned by a curious woodcut facsimile frontispiece.

Nearly ready, beautifully printed, fcap. 8vo, price 3s. 6d.,

The Choicest Jest of English Wits;

from the Rude Jokes of the Ancient Jesters, to the refined and impromptu Witticisms of Theodore Hook and Douglas Jerrold. Including the Cream of Joe Miller: comprising the best Sayings, Facetious and Merry, which have contributed to give to our country the name of Merry England.

Now ready, price 5s. ; by post, on roller, 5s. 4d.

Magna Charta. An Exact Facsimile of

the Original Document, preserved in the British Museum, very carefully drawn, and printed on fine plate paper, nearly 3 feet long by 2 feet wide, with the ARMS AND SEALS OF THE BARONS ELABORATELY EMBLAZONED IN GOLD AND COLOURS. A.D. 1215

COPIED BY EXPRESS PERMISSION, and the only correct drawing of the Great Charter ever taken. This important memorial of the liberties and rights of Englishmen is admirably adapted for framing, and would hang with propriety from the walls of every house in the country. As a guarantee to the purchaser that the facsimile is exact, the publisher need only state that Sir Frederick Madden has permitted copies to hang for public inspection upon the walls of the Manuscript Department in the British Museum. It was executed by Mr. Harrison, under whose auspices the splendid work on the Knights of the Garter was produced some years ago.

BEST FRENCH LESSON BOOK EVER PUBLISHED.

Ordinary price 5s., a few copies now offered at 3s. 6d.

Vocabulaire Symbolique. A Symbolic

French and English Vocabulary, for Students of every age, by RAGONET. Illustrated by many hundred Woodcuts, exhibiting familiar objects of every description, with French and English Explanations,—thus stamping the French terms and phrases indelibly on the mind.

Now ready, price 2s. ; by post, on roller, 2s. 4d.

Warrant to Execute Charles I.—An

Exact Facsimile of this Important Document in the House of Lords, with the Fifty-nine Signatures of the Regicides and Corresponding Seals, admirably executed on paper made to imitate the Original Document, 22 in. by 14 in.

. COPIED BY EXPRESS PERMISSION.—King Charles I., January 20th, 1648, was brought from St. James' to Sir R. Cotton's house (now the Speaker's Residence), and was four days arraigned at the Bar of the House of Commons by Bradshaw, and seventy-nine Judges Commissioners, named for his Trial. The original document was kept in the Old House of Peers' Library, and being saved from the Fire, was preserved in the Poet's Tower, and is now under the Librarian's care at the House of Lords. Some of the Regicides died in America, while many of the children of those executed at the Restoration betook themselves to that country and laid the foundations of many of the first families in New England.

JOHN CAMDEN HOTTEN'S LIST.

Thick royal 8vo, pp. 516, original price, 20s. ; now offered at 8s. 6d. ; or half morocco, top gilt, 10s. 6d. only.

French Slang Dictionary: Etudes de

Philologie comparée sur l'Argot, et sur les Idomes analogues parlés en Europe et en Asie, par F. MICHEL.

A very interesting work, full of interest to the linguistic student. It explains all the humorous words found in old French literature, and gives Vocabularies of the Slang words used in nearly every nation in Europe.

Now ready, fcap. 8vo, beautifully printed by Whittingham, price 2s.,

Letters of the Marchioness Broglia Solari,

one of the Maids of Honour to the Princess Lamballe, &c ; with a Sketch of her Life, and Recollections of Celebrated Characters (intended to have been sold at 5s.).

The Marchioness Broglia Solari was the natural grand-daughter of Lord Hyde Clarendon, and consequently one of the collateral branches of the Queens Mary and Ann, and their grandfather, the great Chancellor of England. She played an important part in the French Revolution; was the friend of Emperors and Princes; was intimately acquainted with George the Fourth, Burke, Sheridan, Madame de Stael, the Duke of Wellington, Sir Robert Peel, Sir H. Davy, Paganini, &c., of most of whom she gives characteristic anecdotes. The Marchioness endured many troubles, was robbed of her fortune, and for some time obtained her living as an actress at the theatres of London and Dublin. This work was published by an intimate friend, and the entire impression (with the exception of a few copies) passed into the hands of the family. It is believed that only 150 copies were printed. The book (by those who know of its existence) has always been considered as a *suppressed work*.

[In preparation.]

The History of English Popular Literature,

WITH SOME ACCOUNT OF CHEAP OR CHAP-BOOKS, Penny and Six-penny Histories, Old Romances, Fairy Tales, Books of Wonder, Garlands and Penny Collections of Ballads, Books of Recipes and Instruction, Jest Books, &c.; ALSO THE HISTORY OF THE RISE OF CHEAP SERIAL LITERATURE. 8vo.

This very important work will range with *Nisard's History of French Popular Literature*, 2 vols., Paris, 1854. It will be illustrated with numerous exceedingly curious woodcuts, many by FAIRHOLT, and several from the original blocks used by the old London Bridge and Aldermay Church Yard publishers.

LONDON :

JOHN CAMDEN HOTTEN,
151, PICCADILLY, W.

